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MEMOIRS

OF

JOSEPH HOLT.

VOL. I.

R.J. Hamerton Lith.

Day & Haghe Lith.rs to the Queen

Joseph Wolf

From an original picture in the possession of Sir William Betham.
Painted in 1798.

London: Henry Colburn 13 Gt Marlborough Street.

MEMOIRS

OF

JOSEPH HOLT,

GENERAL OF THE IRISH REBELS, IN 1798,

EDITED

From his Original Manuscript,

IN THE POSSESSION OF SIR WILLIAM BETHAM,

ULSTER KING-AT-ARMS OF ALL IRELAND, KEEPER OF THE RECORDS OF IRELAND, ETC.

BY

T. CROFTON CROKER, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"All have heard, sure, of Vinegar Hill,
Likewise of the battle of Tara,
Of General Holt and his men
With their guns they call tanta-ra-ra-ra."
Popular Song.

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PREFACE.

THE reasons which led to printing, in this country, the memoirs of Theobald Wolfe Tone, are the same which induce the publisher to submit to the public the memoirs of Joseph Holt; in the first place, as presenting "a most curious and characteristic piece of auto-biography," and in the second, as calculated to gratify the general desire for information on the affairs of Ireland.

"The famous chieftain, Holt," as the writer of these volumes is termed in the Annual Register for 1798, was perhaps the most enterprizing

and distinguished leader of the Irish rebels in the field, and under rather singular circumstances. Few, if any, of the original projectors of the rebellion of 1798, the men who laid the foundation of that event, were actors in the warfare which followed the development of their revolutionary speculations; most of the early conspirators were arrested either before or immediately upon the out-burst of actual hostilities, and their places were supplied by weak, ambitious, and irresolute men, who soon found themselves supplanted by fanatics and cowards.

"If the leaders of *the business*," Holt has remarked, in conversation with Sir William Betham, "were not fanatics, fools, or cowards, how could it have come pass that an almost uneducated man like myself should have obtained so much influence as to become a commander over thirteen thousand men, most of whom hated the Protestant religion, which I had been brought up in and always professed?"

Against the latter part of this statement it may be urged, that so far from the rebellion of 1798, being a Roman Catholic conspiracy to

overthrow the Protestant Church, that a majority of Protestants were engaged as leaders in it, particularly at the commencement, and that they were in fact the persons with whom the design originated; but I believe it will be found upon investigation, that these men, although nominally Protestants, that is, of Protestant descent or connexions, were actually either Deists or Atheists, like the Jacobins of France, whose proceedings had inflamed the imaginations of irreligious men, with a desire to see a new order of things. But at the period when Holt became connected with the Irish rebels, there can be no question that the grand bond of union which held them together was the Roman Catholic religion, and that they were engaged in a confederacy against all within what was regarded the heretical pale of the Protestant Church.

Holt, however, possessed many of the qualifications necessary to form a great commander. He was a man of keen observation, extraordinary physical energy, and cool and undaunted cou rage; with a mind fertile in expedient at the

critical moment of impending danger. These traits in his character, especially when contrasted with the want of thought, the alarm and the indecision of other rebel leaders, inspired respect and confidence in him ; and his humanity and love of justice made Holt admired and esteemed by those under him, of whom he considered himself as the natural protector. His orders were therefore implicitly obeyed, and generally with cheerful alacrity, by men, who, while they detested his creed, loved the individual even before the ministers of their own religion.

It was the possession of these superior qualities—for Holt's acts were his own, he had no instructor; added to his strict enforcement of discipline, and attention to the comforts and wants of his men, that enabled him, as the leader of a war of mountain skirmishes, to defy for six months the united efforts of the Royal Army, and the numerous corps of yeomanry in an area of little more than twenty miles square, within thirty miles of Dublin at its further, and eight or ten at its nearest point of approach·

Nor was this by skulking in the wild and secluded districts of bog and mountain which the county of Wicklow presents, a county, the appearance whereof was most happily compared by Dean Swift to a frieze mantle fringed with gold lace. Holt frequently came in contact with detachments of the army sent against him, and seldom shunned an engagement. In one instance, by the melancholy slaughter of a large body of the "Ancient Britons," he executed what in military parlance would be termed a brilliant affair, and when Holt was beaten or out-numbered, he generally contrived to effect his retreat without any serious loss. On one occasion, in particular, when he was supposed to be surrounded by the King's troops, Holt retired with his corps unbroken.

According to his own statement, Holt became a rebel against his inclination, and having become one, he was the more formidable because he was honest and faithful to his engagement. He proudly asserts, that he never gave information or betrayed his companions, and further says, that he twice rejected an offer made to him on

the part of Government, of a command against his former followers and associates. Holt also boasts that he never committed an act of wanton cruelty, nor was guilty of murder in cold blood; and his detestation of robbery is shewn by his having denounced to the officer commanding the King's troops a gang of robbers who had laid the country under contribution in Holt's name. In short, Holt represents himself as a terrible enemy, but a generous and humane conqueror, who was unwilling to spill blood in savage retaliation, or to allow it to be shed for revenge, and who, on all occasions restrained unnecessary plunder. Although somewhat given to be a fatalist, Holt appears to have been a sincerely religious man, and to have fervently believed in the superintending providence and protection of the Almighty, a sentiment which seems to have been ever uppermost in his mind, and to have cheered and supported him through his extraordinary trials.

In following his narrative it will be perceived that his belief was not without some grounds of evidence; many hair-breadth escapes were oc-

casioned by his uneasy dreams when in imminent danger, and there is an apparent interposition of Providence in his escape from an ignominious death. Religious and moral reflections are of constant occurrence in Holt's account of his adventures, and even the pious phraseology sometimes used by him, and short attempts at hymn-like versification, are indications of the character of the man.

Holt was probably unjustly denounced as an United Irishman by the friends of some of the many culprits he had apprehended and brought to justice. In times of civil convulsion and rebellion, private malice often suggests guilt, and the suggestion brings the consequences of actual culpability on the innocent. This might have been the case with respect to Holt; unless, indeed, that, having heard of the meditated insurrection, "he felt a mysterious call that way;" which, however, does not appear likely, taking into account Holt's circumstances as well as the tone of his mind.

Considering the period, and admitting that Holt had been unjustly denounced as an

United Irishman, he shrewdly calculated his position when he says, that by joining the rebels he had a chance of escape, but by submitting to the enemies who had burned his house and destroyed his property, on a false accusation, nothing but certain destruction awaited him.

The accusation made by Holt against a gentleman of fortune and rank, whose injustice and oppression, he would have it believed, drove him into rebellion, is, perhaps, much exaggerated, and probably the entire affair is misrepresented; but we may fairly imagine that some quarrel which existed between the parties made the individual alluded to, more credulous, than he might or would have been at a different and less critical period, of any assertion respecting the treasonable intentions of Holt; and, therefore, it is possible that Holt's house may have been burned upon very slight grounds for suspicion. The parties are now gone to their account, where both cease to trouble and are at rest, and although, as the editor of Holt's memoirs, I could not refrain from giving his own statement correctly, the omission of the name will, I trust, be

an evidence of my wish to veil, as far as possible, the occurrence. Great, indeed, should be the allowance made for the excitement and irritation in Ireland of the year 1798; all statements relative to which should be received with the utmost caution, though nothing can be too horrible for belief. There can be no doubt that much injustice and cruelty were perpetrated on very slight testimony, and often on mere rumour, by persons who, in peaceable times, would have shuddered with revolting disgust at the mere contemplation; so do times and circumstances change not only the complexion of things, but the very nature of man.

Long after the hopes of success of the United Irishmen had been dissipated, Holt supported himself in the Wicklow mountains; at last, after many almost miraculous escapes, he succeeded in obtaining terms, through the negotiation of Mrs. Latouche with Lord Powerscourt, to whom he surrendered himself on the 10th November, 1798. Holt's life was secured to him on condition of transportation to New South Wales, where, having conducted himself well, he obtained a

free pardon, and returned to Ireland. During his latter years he lived in apparent comfort and respectability at Kingstown, near Dublin, and died there on the 16th May, 1826.

In the Dublin and London Magazine for July, 1826, the following notice of Holt occurs :—

"This insurrectionary chieftain has at length gone 'to the house appointed for all living.' He had been residing in New Dunleary, or Kingstown, for nearly the last seven years, and had succeeded in gaining the friendship or good-will of most of his neighbours; there were a few, to be sure, whom no concession, no care on his part, could thoroughly soften. The men of the old ascendancy school, the deeply dyed 'true-blues,' could never forget the General's earlier transgressions. His subsequent good conduct and peaceable demeanour could never, in their eyes, atone for the past. This unmitigated spirit of hostility seriously annoyed poor Holt, for it was his wish to be on friendly terms with all.

"I first met him soon after his arrival at Dunleary. He had been engaged in Dublin for a short time in the public business, but the noise

and confusion attending such a trade disturbed him. He was getting old, and, as he told me, he was now anxious for rest and retirement. He said he had secured a sufficiency for the remainder of his days, emphatically adding, that though it came from Botany Bay, it had been fairly and honourably earned.

"I was eager to hear from him something of his exploits in ninety-eight. He said there were many of those transactions that he did not like to dwell on. He had done many things in the heat of passion that he afterwards bitterly repented of. He was like many other well-meaning men, *forced* to become a rebel, against his better judgment and inclination. Holt was a substantial farmer in the county of Wicklow, he dealt largely in wool; he was a Protestant, and, for a time, barony constable, a post seldom filled by men of questionable loyalty. He was a man of good heart, and of liberal principles; he could not join his Orange neighbours in insulting or injuring those who held another creed. He was constantly the humble advocate of his Catholic brethren, and this, in the eyes of the

ultras, was a sort of apostacy, it was worse than the sin of popery itself. He, consequently, became what was then called a marked man. He was cursed with an over-loyal squireen for a neighbour. This little tyrant annoyed him in various ways; he denounced Holt as one of the disaffected, and at length, when the rebellion broke out, he proceeded with a troop of yeomanry to his dwelling for the purpose of arresting him. The latter was away at Carnew on business; the women fled as they saw their old enemy approaching, not calculating much on his forbearance, and the loyal band, after searching the place, found a few letters, which they construed into treason. They instantly set fire to the house, and Holt on his return home found but a heap of ashes, where he had so recently left a comfortable farm house and a large haggard of corn."

The history of Holt is still kept alive in the memory of the Irish peasantry by various popular songs, especially one entitled "The Victim of Tyranny," which thus commences:—

"I had a tyrant landlord, base,
Who saw my heart to Erin yearned,
He to the ground my Cot did raze,
And fired my substance dearly earned.
Unmoved, remorseless, he beheld
My Cottage falling, as it burned;
His savage band insulting yelled,
Nor from their deed of ruin turned."

All that has been hitherto advanced, places Holt's character in its most favourable light, and it now becomes the editor's duty to acknowledge that his Hero, estimating him by his own statements, was an exceedingly vain man, and the consequence is, that he often inflates facts into nearly that extreme state of expansion, that the slightest attack from the lance of an assailant is formidable as to the buoyancy of Holt's veracity. It is impossible, for instance, to believe that three hundred and seventy of the Royal troops were slaughtered by Holt's rebel band at Ballyellis, in less than twenty minutes, although there can be no doubt that this surprise was well managed on the part of the rebels, and that Sir Watkin Wynne's corps sustained a serious loss. Neither

is there any doubt that a discussion occurred between Lord Strangford, and Admiral (the late Sir Manley) Dixon, respecting the condemnation of the Nannina, an American vessel, which had been seized by an English brig-of-war, at the Falkland Islands, in the act of rendering assistance to shipwrecked British subjects; but that the American, Spanish, Dutch, and French ministers were parties to this question, could scarcely be credited, whether Lord Strangford had done me the favour or not of placing this point beyond dispute.

Holt is also very free of his abuse, which is vented in a vein of vulgar satirical humour, against all with whom he happens to differ, and his irritable temper betrays itself in many quaint impertinences. To the editor it has been a most painful duty to preserve these ebullitions of Holt's feeling towards individuals, but it was impossible to omit passages so characteristic of the man.

The aspersion of the conduct of Major Foveaux by Holt, is so extremely gross in every particular, and Holt, upon all occasions, men-

tions the name of that officer with so much evident malice, that the editor hesitated whether he should not expunge the name, and suppress the passages in question. He at length determined that Holt's defamation should stand, feeling satisfied that the vindictive spirit which animated Major Foveaux's accuser would be the best answer to assertions which Holt had taken every opportunity of disseminating, and that insinuation or suppression is always worse than direct accusation. Had Holt's abuse of Major Foveaux been expressed in less decided terms than those of profligate, tyrant, and murderer, his statements might have obtained that credence which it is now impossible to give them.

Remarks of a similar tendency may be made with reference to other individuals.

If as an impartial editor, I am bound to make what in Ireland is called "a clean breast of it," I must say that in many cases, notwithstanding the honest pains that I have taken to support every statement of Holt's by quotations from respectable authorities, there is an evident over-colouring in his Memoirs, and that they

must be received with due allowance as an ex-parte statement. That Holt has suppressed certain passages in his life, I have not the slightest doubt, having in particular reason for believing that he did give information to Government when in the Cove of Cork, of the existence of an important conspiracy among the United Irishmen of the Southern districts; and further, that this information was given at his interview with General Meyers, and Sir Charles Ross, which he has so minutely detailed. But notwithstanding this, and no doubt other similar omissions, and the exaggeration of various points, which add to, as the omissions noticed would detract from, the romance of Holt's narrative, I am inclined to believe that his Memoirs are substantially correct, and convey accurately enough, to use a painter's term, "the general effect" of his character, and no unfair idea of the eventful times in which he lived, and was a distinguished actor.

However, with all the blemishes in Holt's character, he was calculated to have made an extraordinary figure in the history of his—I

may say of our times, if he had been of a different grade of society, and a man of education. Had Holt been in the British army, and in a situation to improve his mind, and acquire information and polish, he would most likely have risen to eminence.

Of Holt's personal appearance, the portrait prefixed to this volume will convey a correct idea. His height was about five feet ten inches; he was extremely well made, of compact muscle, and remarkably athletic and vigorous. Holt's hair was black, and his eye-brows heavy and bushy; his eyes were dark and penetrating, but rather small. His nose was of that class usually termed Roman, his forehead was finely developed, and his face well proportioned and intellectual. He wore his beard under his chin, shaving only the prominent parts, and this fashion appears to have been a distinguishing mark of the fraternity of United Irishmen. Holt had the power of readily assuming a commanding or determined look, but there was nothing ferocious in it or in his appearance; and his smile was one beaming with benevo-

lence. His whole appearance was likely to gain submission, as determined resolution was stamped on his countenance. In his manners he was simple and unaffected.

The manuscript of these volumes was procured by Sir William Betham, from Joseph Harrison Holt, the son of the writer, not long after his father's death, when young Holt sold his little property at Kingstown, and proceeded with his family to New South Wales, to join his elder brother, and to endeavour to recover the hundred acres of land there, which he said had been granted to him as a child. Holt's eldest son, Joshua, having remained in New South Wales, is I am told a prosperous and respectable man. The manuscript, although undoubtedly a genuine document, is, for the most part, a transcript either of Holt's original rough copy, or, as seems more probable, from the colloquial style, a transcript after his dictation, founded upon the notes which he states that he had made when on the Falkland Islands in 1813. It was written in 1818, and revised by Holt in the

course of the following year, when he appears to have added a few observations. Holt's secretaries, for it is evident that he employed more than one amanuensis, were quite as illiterate, if not more illiterate than himself, and their orthography in many passages, required some study on the part of the editor to decypher. For instance, the word niece, in the manuscript, is usually spelled "*nees*," buffalo, "*buefalow*," boatswain, "*bousin*," Gazette, "*Gisat*," verandah, "*farranda*," windward, "*winword*," &c., and, according to the same authority, the crew of the Sydney, a ship from India, consisted of "*Mahomudins, say pies, and Glascars.*" But these mispellings, which in type are trifles to the eye of a reader, become far more formidable in manuscript not very legibly written. As words of ordinary occurrence were thus disguised by Holt and his secretaries, it is no matter of surprise that scarcely the name of any place or person is correctly given, and it has formed no small part of the editor's labour, to identify places and persons, by re-

ference to various authorities. Thus, "*Mager Provoux*," or "*Purvoux*," is intended for Major Foveaux, "*Oie*," for Owhyhee, "*Oteitt*," for Otaheite, "*Miderera*," for Madeira, "*Habbit*," for Abbott, "*Gerluselim*," for Jerusalem, "*Bly*," for Bligh, "*Putlon*" and "*Puttleton*," for Putland, "*Alliegander*," for Alexander, "*Blacksell*," for Blaxcell, "*Graace*," for Grose, "*Drewry*," for Durie, "*Annevil*" it is conjectured means Grenville; and so on for a list which may be extended to many pages.

These examples are offered as an apology for any errors which may be discovered, as for instance, the editor is by no means certain that the Dr. Kelly mentioned in vol. ii., page 80, is not intended for Mr. Caley, &c. And it should be observed that Eagle Island of the Falkland Islands, is now generally known as "Speedwell Island."

Yet, notwithstanding the numerous emendations made in respect to local and personal names, the editor has adhered in the text closely to the original manuscript, feeling that much of

the interest and value of the narrative would be destroyed by any attempt to refine Holt's expressions, or embellish his style.

Two specimens of Holt's mode of spelling may be found in the letter addressed by him to Lieutenant D'Aranda, and in Holt's copy of Mr. Sumpter's letter, which are printed in the second volume. The slight liberties also that it was necessary for the editor to take with his text, will be exemplified by reference to the fac-simile of a passage in Holt's autograph, and the corresponding pages of the second volume. And it is certainly remarkable, that although the writers were very illiterate, the style throughout is so clear, except occasionally, in local descriptions, as scarcely to admit of being in any respect misunderstood.

The division adopted in the present volumes is that into which Holt's account of his fortunes naturally separates itself, namely, his career as a rebel in Ireland, and his adventures as an agriculturist in New South Wales. The first volume brings down Holt's history to "the close," I use

his own words, "of that most unhappy year, 1798." And the second details the vicissitudes of his life, through good and evil report, nearly to the period of his death.

T. C. C.

Rosamond's Bower, Fulham,
December 1, 1837.

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MEMOIRS

OF

JOSEPH HOLT.

I WAS born in the year 1756. My father was John Holt, of Ballydaniel, in the parish of Castlemacadam, in the county of Wicklow; a comfortable farmer, who held a farm there, at a low rent, and it is still in possession of the family of John my elder brother. I had five brothers, John, Thomas, William, Joshua, and Jonathan, and a sister Mary. 1756.

The Holts were descended from one of those protestant settlers who were introduced into Ireland in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., on the forfeiture of the families of O'Toole and O'Byrne.

I was inclined to farming and a country life, in which my father indulged me. My brothers

1773. were brought up to trades; one became a bricklayer, and another a carpenter. I was sent to be instructed by John Low, the steward and gardener of a Mr. Sweeny, of the county of Dublin, near Bray, under whom I continued five years and three months; after which time I went to the north of Ireland to improve myself in farming, but I remained there only a short time.

1778. On my return to Dublin, I was accosted one morning, in the Phœnix Park, by Captain Fitzgerald, of the Thirty-second Regiment of Foot, who was employed in recruiting for the East India Company; and who, observing me to be an able-bodied young man, was anxious to get me as a recruit. He offered to make me a serjeant in the first instance, and to employ me in recruiting. I agreed to his proposal, and in the course of twenty-one days obtained thirty-two recruits. My father and mother, however, prevailed on me to give up my intention of going into the army, and to please them I obtained my discharge, and remained at

1780. home with my parents until the year 1780.

1782. In 1782 I married Hester Long, of Roundwood, in the county of Wicklow. She was the

daughter of a comfortable protestant farmer, a tenant of Andrew Price, Esq. I then took a small farm, and soon after became overseer of public works in the parish of Dirrelossery and the barony of Ballynecor. I also obtained a commission as deputy billet-master, under Sir John Blaquiere, K. B., and held it till the year 1798. I also held the office of deputy Alnager for the counties of Wicklow and Wexford, and sealer of old woollen-drapery from the same gentleman. 1782.

In 1794, a band of robbers, who had their head-quarters in Dublin, made inroads into the county of Wicklow, and robbed several persons in the neighbourhood of Roundwood. For some time they committed their depredations with impunity, and were so daring that they became a terror to that part of the country. Among others they robbed Luke Toole of Annamoe, Laughlin Byrne of Ashtown, Christopher Limes of Nucroheen, Mr. Thomas Bell near Delgany, and many more. 1794.

At the head of this gang was a noted robber, named Patrick Rogers, a man of great personal strength and determination of character; he resided in the neighbourhood, and knew every

1794. fastness in the very difficult and intricate country around. A large reward was offered for his apprehension. One day, in the August of this year, I met Andrew Price and Francis Eardley, Esqrs., with two other persons, who spoke to me, and asked me if I had seen Rogers; and they told me of the reward offered. Higginbotham, one of the men, proposed to me "to set" Rogers, that is, to watch him, and lay a plan for taking him, and offered to give me 100*l.* of the reward if they were successful. I looked at him scornfully, and said, "I am no setter; I would not pretend to be a man's friend for the purpose of betraying him. All is fair against an enemy, while he is one; but spies and informers have ever been justly held in detestation. Rogers is a bold fellow, and would not be taken by any man whose courage was not equal to his own; but if you really want to take him, I will promise to do it. Mind, however, that it will not be by treachery. I will take him in a fair, straight-forward manner."

Mr. Price, who had a good opinion of me, and always was my friend, cried out, "Bravo, Holt, I am not deceived in you; I said you were the man, if any in the country could do it,

who would apprehend Rogers. He is not a cowardly treacherous setter, Higginbotham, but he is able and willing to serve the public and his neighbours by bringing a notorious robber to justice." 1794.

Higginbotham then asked me if I thought myself able to take Rogers, which put me so much on my metal that I said I could take two such men, and more than that, would do so; and I immediately proceeded to put my promise into execution, which I performed after a chase of five hundred miles.

Having gained some clue to the course which Rogers had taken, I communicated it to Mr. Price, and obtained from that gentleman a letter to Mr. Thomas Bradnor, of Toomacork, who gave me two men to assist me. I then proceeded to Newtown Barry, where I struck off the road to a shebeen house, or cabin, in which whiskey is sold without a license. It was kept by a person named Bulger. There we dismounted and called for half a pint of whiskey, and entered into conversation with the said Bulger. I ascertained that a person resembling Rogers had lately been there, inquiring for a place called Mullanasmarcen; I talked

1794. familiarly about him, and said we had been in a fray together; which being reconciled, I was going to bring him home again; Bulger, thrown off his guard, told me the person I wanted was at the Widow Hughes's, of Mullanasmareen, or at Tom Neill's, of Ballycristal. We had a second half pint, and having paid for the whiskey, we proceeded in search of Rogers. The man who was with me, knew the country well, and told me when I came near to the Widow Hughes' cabin. I then dismounted, and having lighted the candle of my dark lantern, put it in my pocket.

It was quite dark when I dismounted at the Widow Hughes's door, which I forced in, and inquired for a woman who I said had robbed my wife. I searched the house, but Rogers was not there. Keeping a good look-out, I observed a little girl run from the cabin. I followed her to Tom Neill's house, from which I saw a naked man start out, whom I pursued to the top of a hill, where I found Rogers in the act of putting on his small-clothes. I went up to him boldly, and told him he was my prisoner; he immediately submitted, and said he was glad to surrender to a person from his own neighbourhood; but his humility

was only feigned, for having put me off my guard, he sprung upon me, and brought me to the ground, and that undermost. But I was too strong and active for him, and by a vigorous effort succeeded in throwing him off, and obtained the advantage by getting uppermost. I kept him down, and after much struggling, secured him, by tying his hands behind him with my garters. Shortly after my two comrades, Derman and Dobbs, came up to my assistance, and asked how it was they had lost sight of me. I told them that I was too keen a sportsman to lose sight of my game after having once had him in view. 1794.

We then proceeded to —— James, of Ballycristal, Esq. a magistrate. He had the character of being a very determined man, and my comrades thought he would most likely fire upon us if we went at that unseasonable hour of night. But I was not to be alarmed, and went up to Mr. James's house. Having rapped, and rung the bell, that gentleman threw up his bed-room window, and demanded our business. I told him my name, and said I had the great robber Pat Rogers in custody, and I wanted his protection. It was now about two

1794. o'clock in the morning. Mr. James instantly came down and admitted us, and Rogers was effectually secured. In the struggle with Rogers I had dropped my pistols in the field, which I now went to seek for, and having found them I returned.

About five in the morning we took leave of Mr. James, and proceeded to Newtown Barry with our prisoner, where we entered the inn to get breakfast. It was soon buzzed about that Rogers was in custody, and the neighbouring magistrates assembled; among them was Henry Gowan, Esq. brother of Hunter Gowan, who told me they would commit Rogers to Wexford gaol, as he was taken in that county. This I resisted, and told them I would not give him up, being my prisoner, till I had lodged him in Wicklow gaol, as in that county his robberies had been committed, and that any man who attempted to rescue him from me should have the contents of my pistols in his body. The magistrates left me with my prisoner, to whom I gave a good breakfast. Rogers had sprained his ankle in the struggle with me, and was so lame that he was unable to move without great pain.

The magistrates having supplied me with a

horse, Rogers was mounted, and his legs se- 1794.
cured by being tied together. The magistrates sent an escort with him to the bounds of the county of Wexford, where I released the unfortunate man's legs from the cords, which gave great pain to his sprained ankle. I took my prisoner to Major Chamney, of Ballyrahin, who congratulated me on my success, and asked me whose warrant I had? and was surprised to hear that I had no warrant, but had undertaken this business from a romantic pique, just to show what could be done by a determined man. Mr. Chamney ordered me some refreshment, and having sent to Henry Moreton, Esq. a neighbouring magistrate, he, on my affidavit as to the identity of Rogers, for whose apprehension a large reward was offered in the Dublin Gazette, made out his committal to Wicklow gaol, and sent for two constables named Francis Rice and William Kendrick to assist me, and I was made special for the occasion. We then proceeded to Tinnahely, where we stopped all night. Having handcuffed one of the constables to the prisoner, I secured him safely, and the next day lodged Rogers in Wicklow gaol. I obtained from Rogers the names of

1794. several of his gang, and for three months afterwards amused myself in the pursuit of these criminal depredators, with the same gratification as glows in the breast of a true sportsman in the pursuit of animals of the chase; and this I did without fee or other reward.

Were I to specify the particulars of each criminal I was instrumental in bringing to condign punishment, it would tire Fabian to relate my exertions* in taking robbers, pick-pockets, coiners, and other disobeyers of the laws. But

* Holt probably alludes to "Fabyan's Chronicle." Semi-literate Irishmen invariably seize upon all occasions to exhibit the full extent of their knowledge, and the result is a national reputation for oratory:—

"He who speaks best—speaks most at random,
And they admire who least can understand 'im."

Stanyhurst, more than two centuries ago, judiciously quizzed the fondness to display classical knowledge, in such of his countrymen as he termed "unlearned Rithmours." When praising a deceased person, Stanyhurst asserts that they compare him to—

—— "for wit Mars, Bacchus, Apollo,
Scipio for warfare, for gentle curtesie Cæsar,
A great Alexander, with a long white neck like a gander.
In years a Nestor, for wars a martial Hector,
Hannibal and Pompey, with Tristram, Gallahad, Orkney.
Hercules in coasting, a Vulcan mighty toasting.
In wisdom Solomon, for strength and courage a Sampson;

I can refer to Captain Thomas Archer of Mount John. I had such an element in punishing criminals as induced me to go to Dublin, where I apprehended Martin Synnot, a celebrated coiner in Newstreet, who had long evaded and defied justice; also, John Morgan and Thomas Keenan:—in fine, my name became a terror to evil doers. 1794.

I still continued Alnager, and being attentive to my business, I was selected by Francis Synge, Esq. (a gentleman of fame in those parts, for taking care of roads, bridges, pipes, gullets, &c.) as his deputy overseer of eighty-four perches of

For justice Radamanthus, in equity worthy Lycurgus,
And not a Thersites, but he was a subtile Ulysses.
In learning Socrates, in faithful friendship Achates,
Yea, though he stand nameless, he was in powers Achilles," &c.

An Irish village bard in modern song, asserts that his mistress, his—

——— "dear and fair Œolian love,
Resembles Venus bright, or gentle Jove."

And "honest Dick Millikin," who seems to have written the far famed "Groves of Blarney," in the same spirit as Stanyhurst's burlesque, declares that—

"There are statues gracing this noble place in,
Sweet heathen gods and nymphs so fair.
Bold Neptune, Plutarch, and Nicodemus,
All standing naked in the open air."

1794. road leading from Dublin to Roundwood; and the manner in which I executed the work pleased him so well that he continued me many years his sub-overseer of roads. It has been often said, I do not doubt, that the bee gathers honey from the hellebore and the deadly night-shade, as well as from the wholesome, innocent, and beautiful plants, and that good may be acquired even from the observance of evil in others. I have found this in many instances. It was by observing the blunders, clumsy contrivances, and awkward manner in making roads which led me to consider of a better plan. Often have I laughed at the stupid intellect of the man who could not observe that water will not run up hills; and have seen his mouth wide open with astonishment, after he had dug a trench for it, that the obstinate water would not leave the spot it was in; and when it was pointed out to him that *the fall* was the other way, he was indeed then awake, apparently, as from a dream. Having made another drain, he found the water well behaved and tractable, running off as well as could be wished. This may be said of other people beside road-makers, and of higher matters, but some people cannot

be improved or convinced by years or centuries of experience, but go on jog-trot, without an idea that their horse can canter or gallop. Others who are doing well forget that the system they are pursuing is good; but if they are wise they should follow on and continue, merely because they are thriving, and the plan they are on answers the end; yet how often do we see a man who is thriving make alterations and change his plans, in hopes of doing better, and thus make a wreck of his affairs. I think, and have always observed it to be as bad a policy to give up a prosperous concern, or change a successful system, as to persist in an unsuccessful one. We may be assured that the good or evil lies in the thing itself, a good one will always succeed, a bad one never will answer, and the sooner it is given up the better. "*Water will not run up a hill.*" 1794.

I now approach the fatal year of 1798, which brought upon Ireland so much misery and misfortune; made so many wives, widows; children, orphans; parents, childless; most of the peasants houseless; and all the population wretched; victims to one or other party, often to both. Houses were burned, and their inhabitants 1798.

1798. butchered; infancy, sex, or age, was often no protection; with the old and infirm, the young orangemen and heretic, fell victims to the cruelty of the enraged rebel; frequently made a monster by the wrongs he had suffered, he retaliated by repeating the cruelties perpetrated on his infirm parents and little ones; and the Orange Yeoman and soldier, with a like ferocity, shed the blood of many old and innocent people, even without remorse or pity. There were brilliant examples of mercy and humanity, but they were not so many or of such frequency as the 'milk of human kindness' would have hoped for.

Mr. ——, of ———, thinking I knew something of road making, appointed me to measure and prepare the necessary papers for a presentment for the repair of 184 perches of road leading from Newtown Mount Kennedy to Roundwood, and also for the repairs of the bridge of Vartrey, the whole amounting to 89*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* which was duly presented at the Spring assizes at Wicklow, which I executed as joint observer with Mr. ——. I advanced all the money and paid my people every Saturday night, Mr. ——, never either at-

tending to the business or supplying a farthing of money. 1798.

I must solicit indulgence if I be tedious in my recital of this affair; to it may be attributed the notoriety I acquired, and the labyrinth of misfortune in which I became entangled. But for it I should probably have passed a life of obscurity, but of quietness and peace, and have been spared many almost heart-breaking adversities. I was proceeding with my little affairs prosperously, and as my ambition was not soaring, I was contented with my lot, and the blessings I enjoyed were quite equal to my desires. I had a comfortable quiet home, an affectionate wife, healthy and endearing children, a contented mind, and withal was grateful for the blessings I enjoyed: all these were dashed from me in the unhappy year of which I speak. I was driven from my house and my children, forced into an association I detested, and became at length the political and military leader of a body of individuals of a mixed character; many, like myself, unwilling participators in the rebellion, but we had no choice left but continuance. I had to wade through innumer-

1798. able and painful sorrows. It has indeed made my name known and celebrated, but I paid a great price for the eminence I rose to, and might have ended my life by a shameful and disgraceful death, had not the Almighty been pleased by many signal providences to have preserved me, and at length so favoured me that I have returned to my country and family, with an unblemished reputation. I am an humble, but I trust a respected individual, having been restored to the character of a loyal subject, and I should never have been otherwise than loyal, had I been left any other alternative than of dying like a dog, a victim to the private malice of those, who were armed with the power of destroying any one they wished to get rid off; or making them fly like myself for protection, to the rebels in the mountains.

But I am indulging in reflections which should come in hereafter, and I will, therefore, conclude now with saying, that individuals, as well as communities and governments, would do well to give up or change all measures which produce evil; but they ought to persist in those which are found by experience to have been

useful and productive of a healthy state of society. Self-preservation was the motive which drove me into rebellion—a respect for the oath of the united Irishmen, which I had taken, kept me faithful to my engagements as one, but as to effecting a change in the government, it gave me little trouble or thought. Reform was much more necessary among the people of all ranks than the government, which was good enough for me. If the laws were fairly and honestly administered, the people would have little reason to complain. It was private wrongs and individual oppression, quite unconnected with the government, which gave the bloody and inveterate character to the rebellion in the county of Wicklow. The ambition of a few interested individuals to be at the head of affairs first lighted up the flame every where. How much misery and wretchedness, and what horrors that selfish ambition produced I can scarcely trust myself to relate; I have, however, the comfortable reflection, that I saved the lives of many. I never shed blood—but to punish villany; in my own defence; fair battle; or where I could not do otherwise without being sacrificed myself; and I attribute to that 1798.

1798. circumstance, under the protection of Almighty God, the numerous and wonderful escapes I have had from destruction.

The poor people engaged in the Irish rebellion of 1798, had very little idea of political government. Their minds were more occupied with their own sufferings or enjoyments; and many, I might say, most, were compelled to join in the rebellion on pain of death! They had no choice, therefore, and great allowances should be made for such miserable creatures, when they fall into the hands of government.

Those who instigate rebellions are the great criminals, not the poor wretches who are driven by circumstances they cannot control, into acts of violence. They are merely the instruments; it is nearly as wise to destroy the musket with which a man was shot, instead of the man who pulled the trigger, as to put an unfortunate creature to death who appears as a rebel to avoid instant death, or who is, by infernal agency, persuaded that the government, or those in power, wish or contemplate his destruction.

To return to my narrative.

I applied to the treasurer of the county, Mr.

Critchley, for the money due for the work done under the presentments before-mentioned, and found it had been paid to Mr. ——, my head overseer; and, by the treasurer's directions, I called on Mr. ——, for the money, who promised to give it to me day after day, but he kept me out of it until my patience was absolutely exhausted. Nine times did I call on him by appointment, and was always put off with the same evasion, and an appointment and promise of payment on a future day. At length I was so provoked, that I told him I should take legal means to enforce it. I wanted money at the time, and the urgency of the demands on myself, made me press him for what he so unjustly withheld. I went to the treasurer of the county and told him I would apply for legal advice, but as I was going away I was recalled, and Mr. Critchley paid me, and said, he would deal with Mr. —— himself. 1798.

Mr. ——, I have been informed, declared that he would be even with me, and his revenge followed suddenly, for he wickedly and inhumanly took advantage of the times to accomplish my destruction; he destroyed my property, made my wife and family houseless, and endeavoured

1798. to make her a widow, and my children orphans. The cruelties of this man to others as well as to myself, were most notorious. He was the first that commenced burning houses in that part of the county of Wicklow, after the proclamation of martial law. In one morning he consumed fourteen houses of his own tenants. He went to one of them and demanded his rent, who promised to pay it in a week, as he had a piece of flannel which he should soon finish, and as soon as he sold it he would pay the rent. "I will give you a receipt in full—you are a rebel," said he, and drawing his pistol, shot him dead on the spot. It was very early in the morning, and the poor man was in his shirt, having just risen from his bed. Mr. — remarked, "I saved the rascal's wife the trouble of stripping him." This may be taken as a specimen of the acts of this man.

I am not able to give any account of the early workings of the Rebellion, or its silent progress, when preparations were making for its breaking out, any more than any other casual observer.*

* "In the spring and summer of 1797 strong symptons of disaffection began to appear in it [the county of Wicklow], such as cutting down trees to make pike handles, sounding

No man could live in those times, without perceiving that a disturbed and uneasy something 1798.

of horns, meetings of the people on moon-light nights for the purpose of exercising, and firing shots to intimidate and keep within their houses the loyal inhabitants. Some vigilant and intelligent magistrates, seeing that nothing but active and seasonable exertions could save the country from destruction, had the landholders and principal inhabitants convened, to take its alarming state into consideration. Notwithstanding the most indubitable proofs that treason fermented and had made a considerable progress in the country, which was evinced by the facts which I have stated, many noblemen and gentlemen were so incredulous, in consequence of the artful conduct, and gross misrepresentation of the disaffected, and of the readiness of the multitude to take the oath of allegiance, as not to believe that they had treasonable designs, and for that reason, the meetings were frequently adjourned; and instead of adopting vigorous measures, the most friendly and pacific addresses to the people were published, inviting them to respect the laws, and to return to a sense of their duty.

"The Committees of the United Irishmen regarded their patience and forbearance, as cowardice and pusillanimity; and the lower class of people became daring and insolent, pulling down the pacific resolutions of the county meetings, and denouncing vengeance against such magistrates and loyal subjects, as expressed a disapprobation of their seditious proceedings, or had taken an active part against them; and at length it became dangerous for persons of that description to traverse the country for fear of being assassinated.

"At last they were driven to the necessity of proclaiming the whole county, as the infection had spread very widely. Some parts of it had been proclaimed 10th November, 1797.

1798. was brewing, and agitating men's minds; and the sudden sobriety and orderly conduct of the

The general meetings of the people, in their respective districts I have already mentioned. It had a most terrific appearance in the country round Newtown-Mount-Kennedy. The people in considerable numbers, headed by their captains, and variously armed, paraded there. On being interrogated by the gentlemen of the county, who remonstrated to them on the dangerous consequences of their conduct, they said in excuse, that they assembled in defence of their persons and property, against the Orangemen, who, they said, conspired against them, and were to rise and cut off every person of their persuasion, without exception.

"I have already mentioned that such reports were framed for no other purpose, but to kindle an inextinguishable hatred in the Roman Catholics against the Protestants; and the effects of it appeared afterwards in the massacres which took place in the counties of Wicklow, Wexford, Carlow, Meath, Dublin, Kildare, Mayo and Sligo.

"Matters remained in that state, till the spring of 1798, when a paper containing the proceedings and resolutions of the county of Wicklow Committee was obtained, and was afterwards proved upon oath before the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, which showed the extent and malignity of the conspiracy.

"Government still desirous, if possible, to avoid harsh and coercive measures, and to induce the people to return to their duty and their allegiance, by mild and conciliating means, Lieutenant-General Craig, by their orders issued a proclamation, dated the 11th May, 1798 [printed by Musgrave, Appendix, No. xvi. 3], and Major Hardy, a humane gentleman and a judicious officer, who then commanded in that county, used the most zealous endeavours to the same end.

lower classes was very remarkable.* But the secret was kept from all those not sworn, with a surprising fidelity. Still rumours were afloat, and people suspected all was not right; accounts of events were spread before the events hap- 1798.

"Early in the month of May, as the country was in such an alarming state, that no loyal subjects could with safety remain in their houses, the yeomen of the district were ordered into garrison at Newtown-Mount-Kennedy."

"From the beginning of the year 1797, it was perceived by some magistrates of discernment, that the lower classes of the people were very unwilling to pay their debts, or to fulfil any engagements. That they appeared surly when called on to do so; and they were heard, when angry, or drunk, to hint on such occasions, that they would soon have an opportunity of being revenged. They were seen to remain later than usual at fairs and markets, and in public houses, and to confer together in whispers."—*Sir Richard Musgrave's Irish Rebellions.*

* "For some months previous to the rebellion the priests strongly inculcated the necessity of sobriety and peaceable demeanour, to lull the magistrates and government, and to prevent the rebels from betraying their secrets, which had such an immediate and universal effect, that the whiskey houses were deserted, and those who had been the most notorious drunkards, could not by any persuasion be induced to drink any spirits, and abstained from broils and quarrels, and particularly seditious language in any mixed assemblies.

"Such instructions penned with energy and elegance, were printed and circulated among the people, which rapidly

1798. pened; and nightly meetings were held of large bodies of men. These and other indications that something unusual was going forward, could not of course escape my notice.

I was at this period fully occupied, and had

produced an apparent reformation in their manners, to the great surprise of those who were ignorant of the secret motives which occasioned it."—*Sir Richard Musgrave's Irish Rebellions.* *

It appears to be the opinion of those best acquainted with Ireland, that a lull in the turbulence of the Irish peasantry is a fearful omen of meditated insurrection. See upon this point the evidence of Major Willcocks before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1824.

Major Willcocks is asked—

"Are the fightings [at fairs] less frequent at those periods [of intended civil commotion]?

"I think they are.

"Have you ever heard any gentleman in the country say, that it was a good sign that people were fighting each other, for that then they would not attack them, or words to that effect?

"I have heard gentlemen of the country say, and Magistrates, that it was a good sign to see the lower classes at war with each other, for then it was not to be supposed that they were combining against the State."

By the same Committee it is observed to Mr. Blackburne, that

"Since these disturbances [1821] have commenced in the country, fighting at fairs has been in a great measure discontinued?

"I believe," he answers, "generally speaking, the effect

the unlimited confidence of my employers. I 1798.
was wood-ranger, sales-master, and general manager in Ballycorry, for Mr. Tottenham, as well as for Mr. Miles, and Bryan Byrne of Ballynabarney and Kurakea, and my income from all these situations enabled me to support my family in a decent comfortable manner. I was also billet-master of the army, and billetted a part of the Antrim militia in the houses of the neighbourhood, and a serjeant and his wife in my own house, where I had a spare bed. It was well for me I did so, as will soon appear. I had that year made great exertions to finish my road work, presented at the Spring Assizes, which I had accomplished, and was now cutting my turf, that I might have my summer work in a forward state, little dreaming of politics or any other thing than my lawful affairs, or of the destiny which awaited me, or the enterprizes I should soon be called on to undertake.

As I was alert and active I was up with the

of general associations has been to discontinue the number of fights at fairs.

"Explain to the Committee the reason.

"Because it reconciles and unites, in the pursuit of a common object, conflicting leaders, and persons who generally engage in those affrays."

1798. lark and about my business, recollecting the old proverbs, "He that would thrive should rise at five," and "The early bird gets the worm." Though, by the latter rule, it would have been more prudent for the worm not to have been out so early, whatever it might have been for the bird. But it was fortunate for me to be out, or —— would have settled me; however, whether or not, my habit was to rise early. One morning about half-past five, Mr. —— before-mentioned, of road money memory, came to my house with a party of the Fermanagh Militia, and calling my wife out, inquired where I was? She told him I was cutting turf, and he went away. He returned again about twelve o'clock, made the same inquiry, and went away.

I returned home to dinner, and having heard of the visits of —— I began to suspect he meant me no good, and yet I could not imagine any mischief he could do me, as I knew there was no guilt in me. While I was musing about the matter, the serjeant's wife came into the room much excited, and said to me, "God help you, poor man, your life is in danger." I rose up and asked her what she meant. She said,

"Your house is condemned, and I am ordered out of it, why I do not know." I went to the door, and from thence saw Mr. —— with a party of soldiers in the direction of the turf bog where I had been employed. 1798.

I recollected his threat of revenge, and judging of his malicious disposition from his burning his own tenants' cabins, and shooting the man, as I have before related, I felt that innocence would be no protection against him, and that if he got me in his power, he would assuredly murder me. I was so strongly impressed with this belief, and also thought that if any of the friends or connections of the many villains I had been the means of bringing to justice, swore falsely against me that I was a rebel, it would be of little avail that I was innocent, especially if I was once in his power. I therefore thought it most prudent to get out of the fangs of this wolf; and I took my sword cane, a brace of pistols, and some money. Hastily bidding good bye to my wife, my son, and daughter, I left my home.

I crossed Vartrey river* and proceeded to

* The Vartrey is a mountain stream close to the Hamlet of Roundwood. Its "course lies for about three miles from

1798. White Rock, formerly occupied by Mr. Edwards, at this time in the possession of Mr. James M'Clatchy, sub-sheriff of Wicklow,* where I sat down, meditating on my situation, and not knowing what to think or what step to take next, hardly believing it possible that Mr. —— would proceed to extremities so far as to injure my family or property, though he might have taken a personal revenge upon me.

How soon was I undeceived: about seven o'clock in the evening, like Lot's wife, I looked back in the direction of my home, where I had left all that was dear to my heart, my

Roundwood over a rocky and gravelly bed, through open and easy banks, until its waters are precipitated about one hundred feet with great force and fury into the Devil's Glen, forming a picturesque and irregular cascade."—*Angling Excursions of Gregory Greendrake in Ireland*, 1824.

There is a river of the same name in the County of Kerry, which falls into Valentia Harbour, and both are so called from the Irish word ꝼeapṫoꝛꞃ, rain, because their waters are considerably augmented in wet weather. See note at page 33.

* The name of "James M'Clatchy, clerk of the peace," appears to an address from the magistrates of Wicklow to the inhabitants of that county, dated 3d April, 1798, which was printed and generally circulated; and may be found in Musgrave, Appendix xvi. 1. Lord Powerscourt presided at the meeting from which this pacific document emanated.

darling wife and children, and my neat well ordered and comfortable habitation, where I enjoyed so much happiness, and had hoped to pass all my days in peace and quietness. I saw it in flames! what were my feelings I leave to the reader to imagine! it is impossible for me to describe them, it was more than man could bear. I did not know the extent of the infliction; my property was destroyed, my wife and children houseless and destitute, that I knew; perhaps too they had been murdered. I roused myself from brooding over my misfortunes, and vowed revenge, and I made the vow in the fullness of my wrath: gracious God! forgive me, I knew not what I did.* I was wild with grief, and agi- 1798.

* Holt's case, if correctly stated by him, may be quoted in illustration of "the recipe to make a rebel," published in the Courier newspaper of 22d June, 1798.

"Take a loyal subject, uninfluenced by title, place or pension; *burn* his house over his head; let the soldiery exercise every species of insult and barbarity towards his helpless family, and march away with the plunder of every part of his property they choose to save from the flames," &c.

"To authorize the burning of houses and furniture, the wisdom of administration may have seen as good reason for, as for other acts of severity, though to me and many others that reason is not clear. These burnings doubtless caused no

1798. tated by the strongest feelings of detestation and hatred against the monster who had, as I believed, from malice, brought such miseries upon a wife and children that were a thousand

small terror and consternation to the disaffected, but they caused also a loss to the community at large, *rendered many quite desperate who were deprived of all*, and augmented the violence of hatred in those among whom these houseless people took refuge. The destruction of corn and other provisions, of which great quantities were consumed by fire, together with houses, was in my opinion worse than impolitic; and its effects were felt in dearth and famine for two years after. Probably in this, as in other cases, the lower actors in the political scene sometimes exceeded the limits within which the wisdom of administration would have confined them, if that had been practicable after these had once been vested with authority."—*Rev. James Gordon's History of the Rebellion in Ireland of* 1798.

"Men notorious for every moral and political depravity were distinguished by the favour of government, and exercised the most wanton display of authority as ignorance or interest might suggest. The administration of the country perceived the evil, but had neither the firmness nor the justice to redress it. Hence men of moderate political temperament were victims to the suspicion or the resentment of those, who admitted no medium between the ardour of the democrat and the submissive loyalty of the mere tool to power. That fiery zeal which acknowledged no moral or constitutional guide, has often driven men, distinguished through life by the purest constitutional principles, to acts of the most unmeasured resistance."—*Charles Hamilton Teeling's Personal Narrative of the Irish Rebellion of* 1798.

times dearer to me than my own existence. 1798.
I pictured to myself a thousand evils which had befallen or would happen to them, and the contemplation drove me to madness. Like a fury I proceeded towards the Devil's Glen, a name very appropriate to my frame of mind.*

On the way I was soon joined by my wife, who told me that —— said, that he was little satisfied with burning my house, and that he wished to have me in the flames. She gave me an account of the transaction. I had been accused of being a united Irishman, and accusation was quite enough in the mind of a tyrant. I was out at five in the morning on a summer's day minding my business, which was proof of my guilt. I did not allow myself to be tamely butchered, or trust myself to the

* Sir Richard Musgrave states that, on Wednesday the 25th July, the rebels "burned all the Protestant houses, [*quere*, houses of the Protestants?] sixty in number, between Rathvilly and Hacketstown. This desolating spirit," adds Sir Richard, "was very much encouraged by the refusal of the general officers to assist the civil magistrates with troops to prevent it. Mr. Hume, member for the county, made such an application to General ——; but he openly and bluntly refused him, having said, that such outrages were occasioned by the burning of houses by country gentlemen."

1798. tender mercies of Mr. —, and, therefore, I must be guilty, and he proceeded to burn my house. The soldiers first broke open my desk, and took away the money and other valuable things that it contained; then loaded themselves with my provisions, of which I had good store in beef, bacon, hams, &c.; and turned my poor wife and children adrift in the world without a roof to shelter them, exposed to the merciless or wanton atrocity of the excited soldiery.

One Nailor, whom I had made by a device pay a sum of money that he owed to Edward Brady of Ballynacor, vowed revenge against me, and the country being under martial law, this miscreant swore against me that I was a united Irishman, which was quite sufficient to doom me to death, and my property to destruction without further investigation.

10 May. On the 10th of May, 1798, I entered the Devil's Glen,* where were collected a few un-

* "The Devil's Glen," says the writer of Angling Excursions in Ireland (1824), "is a scene of uncommon wildness and beauty, and which amply repaid the curiosity that led us to it. The Glen is about an English mile in length, and narrow; an excellent road has been perfected along the side of the stream by the proprietor of that side of the Glen, Mr. Tottenham of Ballycorry. The mountains on both sides rise

fortunate persecuted creatures like myself, 1798.
and we recounted to each other our misfortunes and our wretched fate. We passed the night in a cave. On the 11th, Edward Saul, 11 May.
an old man, and a friend of mine, came to

high and almost perpendicular, and exhibit as do the mountains at Luggelaw, the opposites of bare sterility and rich plantation; the one clothed to the very top in the various and beautiful tints of the oak, fir, larch, birch, holly, &c. broken by masses of grey rock, here and there protruding boldly through the surrounding foliage."

"A part of this wood suffered much immediately after the rebellion of 1798, to which sad period there is but too much reference by objects and circumstances throughout this county. It formed the retreat of some of the dispersed insurgents, whom it was found necessary to burn out, and the black and scorched stumps of the trees and underwood exhibit to this day a memorial of the event. The opposite mountain is but slightly sprinkled with a few trees, and on the beetling crags of rock may be seen the hardy and agile goat cropping his adventurous food, and imparting animation to the scene. The river Vartrey, that precipitates its waters into the glen at its head, flows through it in a very picturesque manner, forcing its course over and between large masses and beds of rock, and forming a variety of pools, eddies and streams; after a heavy fall of rain, it becomes a roaring, impetuous and sombre torrent, fretting between the opposing rocks, and speckling its dark and turgid waters with floating patches of white and yellow foam. The extremity of the glen opens upon a rude amphitheatre sprinkled with brushwood, through which the stream, relieved from its vexed passage, winds its more gentle and unobstructed way."

1798. look for me, and brought me some refreshment. At least one-third of the people in the glen were Protestants, and loyal men, if they had not been driven into rebellion by oppression, and thus added to the ranks of revolt.* Much conversation passed between us all on the terrific aspect of the times. I now found it difficult to discover who had escaped taking the oath of a United Irishman. It must have been diabolic influence which first instilled the idea of that oath into the heart of man; but I trust the barbarous treatment I had received, and the unfortunate circumstances in which I was placed, will be some

* Sir Richard Musgrave says, "I did not hear of a single instance of disaffection among the Protestant yeomen in the county of Wicklow (*except Holt, a low fellow, without any kind of principle, and a notorious robber*), or that a person of that persuasion was concerned in the conspiracy or rebellion."

This is not the place to enter into the question of the accuracy of Sir Richard Musgrave's statements, or to vindicate Holt. I believe that posterity will do justice to Holt's memory, and acquit him of being a fellow devoid of principle, and a notorious robber. "Poor Holt," observes Sir William Betham, in a communication which I received from him respecting the publication of these volumes, "it is evident, did not deserve to be described as an unprincipled ruffian by Musgrave; and I am sure Sir Richard would not have given him that character had he known Holt better."

apology for my entering into the business, and for the excitement, and irritation produced in my mind, as well as the inevitable destruction which awaited me if I had not fled from my persecutors,—and having fled, I was in the meshes of the rebellion. By taking the oath I could not recede, for I should then certainly perish, by not having a friend on either side; besides, I had taken an oath, from which no power could absolve or free me. I had, in short, no alternative; I might escape by continuing a rebel to my king, but certain destruction followed my return to the quarters of the military. I write from no disgust or bigotry against any sect or people, but I will not spare to mention and describe the cruelties and atrocities I saw committed. I write from my own knowledge, and not from hearsay or the information of others. 1798.

The night of the 12th of May, I retired to the cave in a rock of the Devil's Glen; a young man named John Arundel was my companion. Early the next day my kind friend Edward Saul, brought me provisions. Refreshed by them, I walked out, and was anxious to hear the opinions and feelings of the people in the 12 May. 13 May.

1798. glen. I had no account of my dear wife and children. Loaded with sorrow; and vexed with the spirit of revenge, I brooded over my contemplated vengeance, turning in my mind how it might be best accomplished. Various were the schemes I planned, but they vanished from my mind for want of means to execute them; at length I determined to let events unravel themselves. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

Like most Irishmen in despair, Arundel and myself determined to fly to whiskey to raise our spirits. We set off for Ballinalea, a small village about a mile distant from the Glen, crossed Ashford bridge, and entered the house of Thomas Kavanagh.* His wife, who knew me, said "My dear Mr. Holt, I pity your misfortunes, and will send you support for a year if I can do it with safety; I have a good heart

* This was probably the Thomas Kavanagh mentioned by Musgrave, as "a Popish member of Lord Aldborough's corps," who appeared as a leader of the rebels. He offered to mount guard at Baltinglass in order to betray it to the insurgents, "which he would have done, but that his treachery was discovered."

Kavanagh was hanged and beheaded, and his head "fixed on a May-pole at Baltinglass."

to you, and so has Tom." We drank freely, 1798.
which only served to aggravate my mind, by bringing to my recollection my altered circumstances and my family's distress. Mrs. Kavanagh came running into the room we were in, saying, "You will be taken, for here come Marks and Chapman." "Are there but two?" said I. "That's all," she replied. "Then I will take them," said I. We then walked towards them, and accosted them.

"Do you want me?" I asked.

"No, sir, was the answer."

"You lie, you cowards; I know you came after me, but have not courage to attempt to fulfil your errand. Attempt it, and I'll soon send you both to eternity."

They walked off, and we entered the Glen. The drink now began to operate; it kindled my affections, and deprived me of my prudence and caution; I determined to set out in quest of my poor persecuted family. I borrowed a musket from one of my unfortunate comrades, and a few ball cartridges, prepared my pistols, and set off for Mullinaveig, but could obtain no tidings of *my care*.

There were several of the militia quartered at

1798. Mr. Price's, and it happened just as I arrived at the ruins of my late happy dwelling, four of them were passing from Roundwood to Mr. Price's. I was so exasperated by the prospect before me, and the desolation I saw, and knowing they were all my sworn enemies, that alone, as I was, I fired upon them, which made them hasten their march into double quick time, and when they reached their quarters, they got under arms. The report soon spread that Holt, with a hundred armed men, was come, and had attacked a party of four, who, of course, fled from so numerous an enemy. They could not prudently do otherwise; it took the whole hundred to fire a single shot from one musket.

I walked to a neighbour's house, from whom I learned that the army had consumed all my substance, but that my wife and children were well. This was my first effort, as a military commander; I detached myself, the only being then under my command, to reconnoitre and gain information, and having attacked and routed a party of the enemy and alarmed their out-posts, retreated in good order to head-quarters much to the satisfaction of the commander-in-chief of the hundred men, which the four militia men's

fears had placed under my orders, but which really was but my poor weary, wretched, and sorrowful self. 1798.

There were now about sixty unfortunates assembled in the Glen; but persecution and oppression daily increased our numbers. The new comers brought us intelligence of the melancholy state of affairs. Our situation was not only forlorn and miserable, but dangerous. There were with us several persons whom I considered to be spies, and we were liable to be visited by the military and yeomanry, and also to be starved; it therefore became necessary to consider what we must do. I called a council and proposed to move, but I found the majority against me; they were residents in the neighbourhood, and refused to leave the Glen. I had determined not to stay, and, therefore, took my departure, and without intending or hardly knowing what I was about, moved towards the ruins of my old dwelling where my heart and affections were, although there was nothing there to respond to my feelings.

I got as far as the grouse house at Luggelaw Mountain, where, fatigued and weary, I threw myself on the grass and slept soundly for some

1798. hours. Early next morning I arose, and looking towards the Glen, I saw it in a conflagration. It had been visited by the destroyers shortly after I had left it, guided by the spies I had suspected.

14 May. On my knees I gave thanks to God for my escape, and felt refreshed, and strengthened, by this great and striking proof of His merciful interposition. I proceeded on, without design, and without object, not knowing where to go or what to do. At length, seeing a smoke rising from a glen, I crossed over towards it; and after proceeding a short distance, I found about seventy persons collected together cooking some fresh beef. They gave me a hearty welcome, and asked me to partake of their meal, which hunger had compelled them to make where they could find it. I was equally famished, for I had not tasted any food for twenty-four hours.

A curious looking little fellow was the commander or chief of this party. Him they dignified with the title of Colonel Mac Mahon, and they seemed to adore him; he appeared as a little king among them. Mac Mahon shortly after proposed to attack a house near Rathfarnham, where he said there was a great

deal of money,—a scheme not at all to my taste, 1798.
and I accordingly declined having any thing to do with it, observing that I was no robber, and did not approve of such practices. The colonel wanted to have me tried as a spy when he found me not inclined to burglary; but there were some among them who knew me well, and I escaped this danger. I stopped with them from Thursday to Saturday, when I suggested 15 May.
that we were not altogether safe in that place, 17 May.
and that it would be prudent to remove to a more elevated part of the country, where we should be more secure from surprise. The great majority agreed with me, but Mac Mahon said I might go alone, for none of them should stir. I answered, "As to that, every man has the exercise of his free will. I will not stay here, for I am sure it is not safe quarters." With lively emotion I leaped over a small brook, saying, "My boys, any of you who wish to save your lives, come with me." There were one hundred and eighteen at this time, of whom one hundred and sixteen followed me, leaving Mac Mahon with two men; and those that followed resolved to obey me as their leader.

This was a remarkable day with me; hitherto

1798. I had been a forlorn unhappy wanderer without an object, farther than to escape from my persecutors. I now became the leader of a band of men, and I felt myself called upon to provide for their safety and support. They were altogether undisciplined and disorderly, but they declared themselves ready to obey my orders, and to submit to such instructions and directions as I should give them. I was uninstructed myself, or nearly so, in the art of war, and military discipline, but my necessity drove me on the resources of my own mind; so I began to consider what would be my best plan of operations. Extensive as the rebellion was, the planners and schemers had no system of co-operation in the different counties: every one, as far as I can judge, was left to do the best he could. I considered that my plan was to keep to the mountains and difficult parts of the country, and to attack only such parties as I could get into a disadvantageous situation: to surprise small parties, and harass the enemy by sudden attacks, where they were unprepared and kept a careless look-out. To enable me to do this, I had first to train my men to obey a command, and to make them act together,

each to know his own division and company; 1798.
and I taught my officers to count off their men, to fire lying down, or on their knees, and to advance or retreat stooping. My pikemen were the most difficult to manage. I had to teach them to step in time, to face about, countermarch, wheel about, but particularly to disperse and form rapidly, and to march in quick or double quick time. They were generally active, able young fellows, and alert as deer, and would puzzle a horseman to catch them. I soon found the value of the pike against cavalry.

On the 15th of June, we marched to the old 15 June.
iron mills, where we killed a bullock, being much in need of food. On the 16th we marched 16 June.
to Fancy Mountain, and there encamped. I sent out a foraging party, who brought a bullock to the camp, the property of Andrew Price, Esq.; it was a beast I had myself reared, and it was much against my inclination that I allowed it to be killed, but there was no help for it; we must kill it or starve. I heard here from my unhappy family.

The foraging party brought with them eight prisoners, Joseph Thomson, Richard Barry, David Edge, William Edge, and four others.

1798. They were brought before me for examination. Thomson was first examined; he was wood-keeper to Frances Synge, Esq. I found nothing against him but negligence of duty; he had been attested as a united Irishman, but had not attended his duty. Barry was proved to have taken the oath of *secrecy*, and was liberated. The two Edges were accused of being Orangemen, but it was mere accusation, no evidence was produced against them, so I ordered them to be kept till the evening, when I let them go, and that night they told Lord Powerscourt what had happened, and instantly joined his corps.*

* The following affidavit of Joseph and John Thomson, relative to this occurrence, has been preserved by Musgrave, Appendix, xvi. 4:—

"County of Wicklow, to wit. } The informations of Joseph and John Thomson of Roundwood in the said County, yeomen, father and son, who being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelists, say, That shortly after the patron of the Seven Churches, in June, 1798, they were taken prisoners by the rebels, and after some time they were brought to the Seven Churches, and kept prisoners in an old yard. When the Wexford rebels joined those of the county of Wicklow, they asked them, what they, the informants, and the other prisoners were? They received for answer, that they were bloody Orangemen. The Wexford men said, 'Why are you keeping them there? they should die.' They were then driven by a mob of the rebels to the butt of the steeple; [*the an-*

On the 17th June I marched to Glandisoun, which lies over the Valley of Glendalough or the Seven Churches, where I fell in with one hundred and eighty poor devils in a most deplorable situation, who all joined and placed themselves under my command. 1798. 17 June.

On the 19th I got information that some yeomen were burning the cabins in the adjacent neighbourhood. We had among us but thirteen guns fit for use, but we were not deficient in pikes, of which I wished to try the effect. I called my men to arms, and was determined to 19 June.

cient round tower] they surrounded them, and made them kneel down and were going to pike them, when some of the rebels cried out, that, as they were Protestants, their blood should not be spilled on that blessed ground; they were then taken to another part of the Seven Churches, again put on their knees and surrounded, first having been stripped of their shoes, hats, and clothes; and again some of the rebels cried out, that was blessed ground, and no Protestant blood should be spilled there, and that they should be taken to the mountains, there to be piked; that some of them, so far interfered in their behalf with the officers, that at last their lives were spared on condition of their joining the rebels, which they did, till they had an opportunity of escaping.

"Joseph Thomson.

"John Thomson.

"Taken and sworn before me, this 20th day of June, 1799.

"William Coltiiurst."

1798. arrest the progress of destruction if possible; at all events to disturb the gentry in their amusement. They were at least five miles from our encampment, and it was necessary to move rapidly. We met them on Ballinvalla hill. I got to windward of the army, and commenced firing. I was anxious to bring the pikes to action, but having no officers in whom I could confide, I was unable to do so with effect, and I did not much admire the position I was in. However, I sent two of my best men to the left, with directions to fire on their flank; this threw them into confusion, which gave an opportunity to the pikes to retreat down the hill, where the horse could not follow them. I thus secured a retreat without the loss of a single man.

The next government bulletin announced pompously that the rebels retired behind a ditch, but there was no ditch in the place, and the story was but a flourish, to account for their own defeat, which was the truth, for they were stopped in their amusement, and suffered some loss.* On their return, some of them got

* An account of this affair appears in the Courier newspaper of 26th June, 1798. It should be observed that "ditch" and "hedge" are synonymous words in Ireland.

their horses shod by Phelim Sally, who, wishing for payment, they shot him at his anvil. Andrew Price, Esq. can say if my account of this transaction be correct or not. 1798.

I then marched over the mountain till I became weary, when I lay down and fell asleep. In the morning I found myself on Blackamoore hill, near the heap of stones which made fast the gibbet where one Walter Read was suspended for some atrocious crime.

On the 20th, my men had dispersed after the action, and I wandered down to Whelp Rock, where I found a great number of poor creatures assembled, without order or control of any sort. I spoke to some of them who bore the title of captains, and asked them what they proposed to do in case they were attacked, and if they had any plan, but they seemed to be completely ignorant, and without system or any notion of 20 June.

"On the 19th instant, a detachment from Mount Kennedy, under command of Lieutenant M'Lean of the Reay Fencibles, and Lieutenant Gore of the Mount Kennedy cavalry, attacked a body of near three hundred rebels near Ballinarush. The fire commenced from the rebels, who were posted behind a hedge on the top of a commanding hill. After an engagement of about twenty minutes, they gave way in every quarter, leaving twenty dead behind them."

1798. regularity or discipline. I set about putting them in order, and forming them into companies, and commenced exercising them in the use of the pike. I found them pretty tractable, and they soon saw the advantages which were likely to result from the system I endeavoured to establish, and immediately agreed to obey me. If taken, instant death awaited us all; it, therefore, behoved us to make the best fight we could, and not to throw away our lives as dastards or fools.

A little cool argument goes a great way with men in danger, and when put to them in a plain way, and brought home to their understandings, that inevitable destruction awaits them if they do not try to avoid it, heedless as he generally is, Paddy can see a little into the consequences.

Our numbers were every day increasing, and our drilling and exercise were as regular as his majesty's troops' roll-call, and also the inspection of new comers, who were not permitted to join without examination, nor were any allowed to depart without leave; information easily travels, and men may be destroyed by spies and informers.

We had several women in the camp, and it will appear that they were not useless. I chose from among them, a tall rattling strong woman, and gave her the name of "The Moving Magazine," from the use I intended to make of her; and the following narrative will show the very important services rendered by this person. 1798.

I despatched her to purchase two large earthen crocks, or vessels, such as buttermilk is kept in, and a quantity of saltpetre and sulphur, with which she soon returned. I made the men pull heath; and burning it, turned it into charcoal, by covering it with dry mould when fully ignited: I then ground it fine, and infused it in the crocks with the saltpetre and sulphur, and having mixed it well and allowed it to subside, poured off the water, and dried it in the sun. I thus obtained a good supply of tolerable gun-powder. It was soft, indeed, and not quite so good as the Battle or Dartford; but it exploded, drove a ball, and by using better powder for priming, it answered well enough.*

* "Holt's mixture," in the slang of the day, was a term for inferior gunpowder. "Lake's pills for a breaking out," (from General Lake), the term applied by the Yeomanry and Militia

1798. My "Moving Magazine" had a basket supplied with fruit, gingerbread, and such like trifles, as a cover to her real character; she had also two large bags or pockets, one before and the other behind, under her petticoats, where she stowed away ball cartridges and ammunition, which she obtained from the king's troops, especially from the militia, who were generally disaffected, and many of whom afterwards deserted to me, and brought with them their arms and ammunition. William Colthurst, Esq. metamorphosed Susy Toole, my "Magazine," into a united Irishman, declaring in his testimony that every woman from Tinnahinch Bridge to Roundwood was a united Irishman. He was not far wrong as to their holding the same opinions.

"My Moving Magazine" was about thirty years of age; she was the daughter of Phelim Toole, a smith, near Annamoe, who having no son, employed Susy in handling the sledge,—not a very ladylike or feminine accomplishment, it

to ball-cartridges.—"Holt's mixture" would have been perfect gunpowder, if he could have granulated it. From the want of granulation a considerable portion must have been blown away unfired in the explosion.

must be admitted,—but it qualified her admirably for the part she had to act in my service. She was about five feet eight inches high, when she stood upright, which was not often, for by the habit of sledging she had acquired a stoop; but her shoulders, although round, were broad, and her limbs strong and sinewy. Her face when young was broad as a full moon, and her nose nearly flat to her face, having been broken by a stone in a faction fight, which much injured the uniformity and beauty of her countenance, and certainly made her any thing but an inviting object, giving her head very much the appearance of that of a seal. Her eyes had been both spared in the conflict, and were black and sparkling; what they would have been in a handsome face, with a decent nose between them, I will not venture to say; but where they were, they had, when excited, a fiendish expression; yet she could put on an imploring and supplicating look to admiration. The mutilation of her countenance made her look very old, and when she wished to assume the appearance of age, no one would take her to be less than seventy. She had an extraordinary power of lengthening her face, by dropping her jaw, which altered her whole counte- 1798.

1798. nance so much, that she did not seem the same person. With her outside dirty pepper-and-salt-coloured frieze cloak, her stoop, and dropped jaw, she could appear a decrepid, miserable baccagh,* scarcely able to crawl; but when it was necessary to act with vigour, her powerful muscles and brawny limbs made her more than a match for many men. A blow from her clenched fist would alarm a man almost as much as the kick of a horse. She was not deficient in eloquent blarney†; and although she had never

* bacać, an Irish adjective, meaning lame, mutilated, or crippled. This word, formerly used as an epithet, (as in O'Donnell's submission in 1531, "Quia Felomeus (Phelim) *Baccagh*, fuit, &c.), has become in Ireland a general name for poor, wretched, and deformed creatures, and also for a certain description of wandering mendicants, not unlike the gaberlunzie man of Scotland.

† The term "blarney," is perfectly understood as meaning "sweet words" or "smooth talk." But the origin of it is not so generally known. In 1602, Lord Muskerry, the possessor of the strong castle of Blarney, near Cork, was suspected by the Lord President of Munster, Sir George Carew, (afterwards Lord Totness), of intriguing with Spain for another invasion of Ireland, and of disaffection towards the English government. Sir George, therefore, determined to get Lord Muskerry into his power and also his strong-hold. The Chief was seized and brought before the Lord President

been at Cork, had a tongue quite equal to her necessities; she was quick in expedients, and ready with a reason for all occasions. 1798.

We remained unmolested, and I believe unobserved at Whelp Rock for some time, where

and Council of Munster for examination. Muskerry disavowed all negociation with Spain, and denied the charge of disaffection with indignity, upon which Sir George Carew artfully urged him "in token of his loyal and guiltless heart," to deliver up his castle of Blarney into the hands of trustees, who would merely hold it until the charges against him were disproved. "At first," says the author of the "Pacata Hibernia," "Lord Muskerry seemed very inclinable to the notion, but in process it was perceived that he intended nothing but juggling and devices."

In this sentence it is not difficult to discover the origin of the idiom "blarney," in its widely extended and popular sense, as expressive of insincere profession, deceitful flattery, or mere quibbling; for, notwithstanding his professions, Lord Muskerry could not be prevailed upon to surrender his castle. Elsewhere in the same work, the conduct of Lord Muskerry, who, be it remembered, was subsequently summoned to Parliament as Baron of Blarney, is thus contrasted with that of other Irish Chiefs by whom a foreign enemy was invited into the country, and it possibly was "a piece of blarney" urged by him in his defence, viz., that "they solicited strangers to invade the kingdom, but strangers having invaded the kingdom, solicited him to partake with them." The comment is, "they were in publicke action professed traytors, and he a juggling traytor."

1798. we were joined by Garrett Byrne, of Ballymanus,* Fitzgerald,† and many others, and

* "Garret and William Byrne of Ballymanus, who headed the banditti which committed these outrages and barbarities, piqued themselves on the antiquity of their family. Garret, the eldest brother, had an estate, and was reputed a gentleman from his birth, property, and education." —*Sir Richard Musgrave.*

"Garret and William Byrne surrendered themselves on condition of being transported, but William having been concerned in variours murders was tried by Court Martial, and executed at Wicklow, 26th September, 1799."—*History of the Rebellion in Wexford, by George Taylor.*

After surrendering himself upon terms granted by General [afterwards Sir John] Moore, Mr. Garret Byrne "was sent into confinement in the castle of Dublin, together with Messrs. Fitzgerald and Aylmer," [who had negociated terms with General Dundas.] "Here they continued until the beginning of 1799, when Lord Cornwallis permitted them to retire to England, where they remained until the 25th of March following, when Messrs. Fitzgerald and Byrne were arrested at Bristol, (where they were for the recovery of their health), at the instance of persons connected with a strong Irish party for the Union, whom it was thought at that time advisable to indulge. These gentlemen afterwards retired to Hamburgh, where they have since resided." [1803].—*History of the Insurrection in Wexford,* A.D. 1798, *by Edward Hay, Esq.*

† Mr. Edward Fitzgerald of Newpark. He "was a man of independent fortune and had received a good education."—*Sir Richard Musgrave.*

"On Saturday the 26th [May, 1798] B. B. Harvey, a

among them Captain John O'Neill. The latter I found entitled to the name of Captain, but it 1798.

gentleman of large fortune and respectability in the county [of Wexford], Edward Fitzgerald of Newpark, and John Colclough of Ballyteigue, were arrested by an order from the Government, and lodged in Wexford gaol, and now began the devastation which this country never before experienced." —*Taylor's History of the Rebellion in Wexford.*

In consequence of charges made by Mr. Anthony Perry of Inch, "Mr. James Boyd arrested at day-break, on Whitsunday, Edward Fitzgerald of Newpark, eight miles from Wexford, and lodged him in the county gaol.

" When Mr. Boyd first appeared, Fitzgerald laid his hand on his breast, and made the most solemn assurance of unfeigned loyalty ; yet a great quantity of pikes were found in his parlour ready mounted and fit for service. Edward Hay slept in the same bed-chamber with him."—*Musgrave.*

Mr. Hay, who has appended to his " History of the Insurrection in Wexford," an " Authentic detail of the extravagant and inconsistent conduct of Sir Richard Musgrave, Bart. with a full refutation of his slander against Edward Hay," relates the particulars of the arrest of Mr. Fitzgerald thus :—

" I had remained there [at Newpark] that night, and was alarmed and roused from my bed by a loud rapping at the door about midnight, which I soon discovered to be the party before-mentioned (of the Wexford cavalry, headed by Mr. Percival the High Sheriff, and Captain Boyd) who came to arrest Mr. Fitzgerald. I requested permission to accompany my friend, which was granted ; but as these gentlemen refused taking the pikes and other arms that had been surrendered at the place the day before to Mr. Turner, and had remained there, I despatched a messenger to him with the

1798. was of a band of robbers; he was destitute of every quality necessary for a military command;

intelligence of what had happened, before we set out with this escort, which met with no other delay, but while they chose to continue rummaging Mr. Fitzgerald's papers, among which, by the bye, they could discover nothing that could in the remotest degree criminate him. We arrived a little after day-light in Wexford, where Mr. Fitzgerald was lodged in the gaol."

Sir Richard Musgrave asserts, that after Mr. Fitzgerald's arrest "he affected many delays in hopes of being rescued by the rebels who had risen, and were approaching his house in great numbers; but Mr. Boyd compelled him, by menaces, to set out for Wexford.

"On the same day," continues Musgrave, "Mr. Boyd arrested and committed Mr. John Colclough of Ballyteigue, in the barony of Firth, eleven miles from Wexford. They were all bailed the day before the evacuation of the town; but it was at the same time agreed that one of them should remain in prison as a hostage for the rest, and that fell to the lot of Mr. Harvey."

After the evacuation of Enniscorthy, (28th May, 1798,) "Messrs. Fitzgerald and Colclough were taken out of the gaol, and dispatched to Enniscorthy, to dissuade the rebels from their proceedings and to preserve the lives of the Protestants. Nothing could exceed the joy of the insurgents at their arrival, and Fitzgerald was styled by them Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Colclough finding his persuasions ineffectual, retired with the intention of re-entering his prison, but Fitzgerald accepted a command in the rebel army. Father John Murphy now marshalled his men, and led them up to Vinegar Hill, which rises in the form of a cone, and

he had no military economy. We were also joined by Captain Perry,* a most respectable 1798.

commands a view of the town," &c. — *Taylor's History of the Rebellion in Wexford.*

Mr. Fitzgerald ultimately surrendered himself upon terms, and was committed to Dublin castle. See preceding note, p. 54.

*"The gallant Perry, whose extraordinary campaign evinced a military science which would not have dishonoured a more experienced veteran in arms, might have remained to this hour the tranquil proprietor of his paternal domain, had not those monopolists of exclusive loyalty dared to impeach of disaffection a heart that was the generous seat of every manly virtue. Perry was a Protestant gentleman of independent fortune, liberal education, and benevolent mind, and nurtured in the very principles which placed the family of the present Monarch on the British throne; and yet, in those days of licensed outrage, he experienced every indignity which low and vulgar brutality was permitted with impunity to inflict. He was arrested on suspicion, personally abused, dragged like a felon to the common guard-house, his hair was closely cropped, and his head rubbed with moistened gunpowder, to which a lighted match was applied, for the amusement of a military rabble." — *Teeling's Personal Narrative of the Rebellion of* 1798.

"A brief account of Anthony Perry, one of the rebel generals above-mentioned, may serve to shew what difficulty a man may find who endeavours to extricate himself from the effects of a conspiracy against Government, when he has once engaged in it. This gentleman, a man of amiable manners and a well-informed understanding, was yet weak enough to be seduced into the conspiracy, and having acted so as to cause much suspicion, was arrested and confined in

1798. gentleman of the county of Wexford, who was always ready to suppress improper conduct, and

Gorey, a little before the insurrection. He repented heartily of his misconduct, and gave information useful to Government. But such was the state of things that he was treated in prison with the utmost harshness and indignity. Among other acts of severity, a serjeant of the North Cork Militia, nicknamed from his habitual behaviour 'Tom the Devil,' cut away all his hair quite close to the head, and then burned all the roots of it with a candle. Being liberated by the Magistrates on the morning of the 28th May, he returned to his house, four miles from Gorey, where he hoped to be permited to remain—unconcerned for the future in plots and conspiracies. But he was soon followed by some yeomen who destroyed his effects, and obliged him to abscond for the preservation of his life. Finding no alternative, he disguised himself in the habit of a beggar, and thus crossing the country, he threw himself into the arms of the rebels.

"In the course of the war he exerted himself to restrain the cruelty of his followers, and as he disapproved both of their cause and conduct, he was always meditating an elopement from them. In an attempt some time after the assault at Hacketstown, to penetrate into the Northern parts of the kingdom, where he hoped to abscond from the rebels, and conceal himself from the partisans of Government, he was taken and hanged at Edenderry, in the King's County, a little before the end of the rebellion."—*Rev. James Gordon's History of the Rebellion in Ireland in* 1798.

"On Thursday the 24th May, Anthony Perry, a gentleman of easy fortune, and late a Lieutenant in the Coolgreny cavalry, was arrested and brought into Gorey.

to prevent cruelty. With him was Esmond Kyan,* another worthy Wexford gentleman. 1798.

"9th June.—The rebels marched for Arklow, 34,000 strong, with three pieces of cannon, under the command of Anthony Perry, Esmond Kyan being captain of Artillery." *Taylor's History of the Rebellion in Wexford.*

Perry, after being tried, by Court Martial, was hanged at Edenderry, on the 21st July, 1798. Soon after the 12th July, "Perry and Kearns," says Musgrave, "made their escape into the King's County, where attempting to cross a bog near Clonballogue, they were apprehended by Messrs. Robinson and Ridgeway of the Edenderry Yeomen, who conveyed them to that town, where they were tried and executed by martial law. Perry was cheerful and communicative, acknowledged the part he had taken in the rebellion, and seemed to glory in it. Kearns was sullen and silent, except when he upbraided Perry for his candour in frankly confessing his guilt."

* "Esmond Kyan, a rebel captain of Artillery, was the youngest son of the late Howard Kyan, of Mount Howard, in the county of Wexford, Esq., and his mother was aunt to the present Sir Thomas Esmond, Bart. He was about fifty years of age, five and a half feet high, and rather a handsome man. He had lost his left arm some years before by an accident, and a cork one was substituted in its stead. He was liberal, generous, brave and merciful; and having received a severe wound in his left arm, above where the cork one joined, and being tired of a rebellious life he went to Wexford, shortly after the army took possession of the town, in order to surrender himself, but being met by the picquet guard, he was found guilty and hanged."—*Taylor's History of the Rebellion in Wexford.*

1798. Many skirmishes occurred at this time between our people and the yeomanry, with various suc-

"In the attack on Arklow," says Taylor, "Serjeant Shepherd of the Royal Irish Artillery, (who was taken prisoner at the Three Rocks) being obliged to manage the [rebels'] cannon, elevated them so high, that the balls went over it; and once having loaded with grape, he turned the gun a little on one side, and swept away about thirty of the rebels. Dick Monk observing this transaction, galloped up and would have killed him, had not Esmond Kyan resolutely interposed, insisting that it was the army cannon which had done the execution. Kyan having ordered Sergeant Shepherd to load with round shot and demolish the town, rode elsewhere, but Shepherd, watching his opportunity, loaded again with grape, knowing it could do no injury; and this he did as fast as possible during Kyan's absence, that he might waste the ammunition. Dick Monk and John Hay being fully convinced that all was not right, now watched the execution of their cannon, and finding that Shepherd was not favouring their cause while loading with grape, obliged him to load with round shot, but the balls flew a mile beyond the town; on which Kyan levelled the cannon himself, and one of them in such a direction, that the ball smashed the carriage of one of the Durham guns to shivers, and another struck the top of the inn."

"Esmond Kyan," says Hay, "who had been wounded in the shoulder at the battle of Arklow [9th June 1798], lay in the most excruciating torture at a house at Ferry-bank, on the country side of the wooden bridge [of Wexford] but on hearing what was going forward [piking the Protestant prisoners on the bridge] he instantly got out of bed, ran to the fatal spot, and by his animated conduct and address, rescued Mr. Newton

cess; we generally had the best of it. Returning from breakfasting with Father Donelan, the priest of Black Ditches, where a council of war was held on the propriety of our moving into the county of Wexford, I saw a large body of my men collected together in a circle. I hastened to the spot, and rushed into the middle of them, where I found a young man on his knees. I asked his name, which he said was Pilsworth, and that he was servant to a clerk in the Ordnance. He was naked, and the monster John O'Neill said he was a traitor, and was about to pike him. The poor lad gave me a piteous look, 1798.

King, and Captain Milward of the Wexford militia [by whom the Editor has heard the circumstance related], with some others, from the fury of the populace."

"Mr. E. Kyan, whose courage and humanity deserved a better fate," continues Mr. Hay in his History of the Insurrection in Wexford, "was taken near Wexford on his return home in the night, tried, condemned and executed the next day; for although manifest proofs appeared of his humanity and interference, so conspicuously effectual on the bridge of Wexford on the 20th of June, yet this was insufficient to save him, as he had arms about him when apprehended. His fate is the more lamentable, as Mr. Fitzgerald, on surrendering to General Dundas, had secured the same terms for Mr. Kyan as for himself; so that had any circumstance interfered to delay his execution for some time, the life of a brave man would have been saved."

1798. which I shall never forget. I made the men stand by, and told him to get up.

"Now," said I, "Captain O'Neill, what proof have you to allege that this young man was ever sworn, and that he is a traitor?"

O'Neill handed me a letter which was found upon him, saying, "That is proof enough."

I took the letter, and having read it, observed that the man had nothing to say to the letter beyond being the bearer of it, "Did he fire upon you?"

"No, he was without arms."

I felt very indignant at this fellow's inhumanity and thirst for blood, and told him there was no evidence of a cowardly heart so strong as cruelty to the unarmed and defenceless; and concluded with saying, that had he shed this young man's blood, he should have been tried for wilful murder, and certainly punished.

I then desired Pilsworth to cease his fears, he should suffer no harm. But I called on him to tell me the whole of the business that brought him where he was taken, which he did in the following words:—

"Sir, I am a servant, and was sent by my master with that letter, the import of which I did not of course know. I was observed by that

man (pointing to Neill), who stopped me and robbed me of my watch and five guineas, and then brought me here, and but for your interference, would have, I believe, murdered me." 1798.

Neill insisted that the prisoner was an Orangeman, but when called on to produce proof of his assertion he had none, and shortly after sneaked away like a thieving vagabond as he was. He did not cease to be a robber and murderer, and his death was a singular visitation of the Almighty upon him for his cruelty. He was choaked on the Curragh of Kildare, by a bit of meat which stuck in his throat; it could not be forced up or down, and thus ended Captain O'Neill, a fellow who was a disgrace to our cause and humanity.

I gave Pilsworth into the charge of William Lannin, a well conducted and good man. This young man still survives, and lives in Francis Street.

From Black Ditches* we marched to Hollywood Glen and Donard, passing the ruins of several houses which had been burned. I called

* A village near Blessington, between that town and the Wicklow mountains. This neighbourhood was the scene of various operations of the insurgents, and a position particularly favourable to their security against cavalry. The name

1798. at the house of Mr. Hynes, a Justice of the Peace, whom I had known and respected many years, and who assisted me in the apprehension of Rogers, the robber mentioned in the early part of this memoir; after which, Mr. Hynes had always been kind and civil to me at the Assizes and Sessions at Wicklow, and wherever he had an opportunity. I advanced to the door with a few men, leaving the bulk of my party at a distance in the road. Two female servants came to the door and said Mr. Hynes was from home. I told them they had nothing to fear; no injury should be done to Mr. Hynes's property, for he was a good man and kind to all, and in gratitude for his benevolence I would protect his house. Some of my unruly rascals began to break the windows, but I soon put an end to that, by drawing my sword, and standing on the steps of the door, I declared that any man who committed the slightest injury should certainly die by my hand. This had a good

of Black Ditches is highly descriptive of the sombre turf banks of the district. A Wicklow man means by "a ditch" *a bank*. The English "Ditch" in Wicklow is rendered by "*a Gripe*." In the brains of an Irishman the terms "Hedge and Ditch," are conglomerated in as indefinite a manner as the words "shall and will."

effect, not only at the moment, for the boys found me out, and did not afterwards venture to disobey my orders. I requested the servants to bring us some refreshment. A bottle of wine was produced, which I divided with Captain Perry and Garrett Byrne, and some whiskey was given to the men, after which we marched on. 1798.

A man was found hiding in a potatoe garden and was brought to the party: they made short work with him; he was tried and shot in a field adjoining, on the left side of the road leading from Donard, at the end of a cabin. I was not at his trial; it was short, and probably a very unjust one. His hiding was considered evidence enough of being guilty of Orangeism. I never approved of these atrocities, and did what I could to prevent them, but Edward Roche* at this time was

* Edward Roche of Garrylough, who had been permanent serjeant of the Shelmalier cavalry, deserted to the rebels on the morning of Whitsunday, 27th May, 1798, with twenty out of twenty-four Papists who were in the troop, and the rebels on that day to the amount of several thousands moved in two divisions, one headed by Roche, the other by Father Murphy, burning the houses of the loyalists between Oulard and Wexford. He "had been a middling farmer and maltster near Wexford, and until this time never appeared in any conspicuous character except that he was permanent

1798. the General of the rebels, and gave orders, which I possessed no power to countermand, and indeed was bound to obey. I had nine hundred and sixty men, all Wicklow men, under my command at this period; I, therefore, assumed the title of Colonel.

We then marched to Ballymanus, the estate

serjeant of the Shelmalier yeoman cavalry, commanded by Captain Le Hunte. He was about five feet seven inches high, rather corpulent, and about forty years old."—*Taylor.*

"He wore common coloured clothes, viz. a snuff-coloured coat, black waistcoat, corduroy small clothes, and a round hat; but for distinction he had two most enormous gold epaulets, and a silk sash and belt, in which he carried a large pair of horse pistols; and he wore a sword by his side." —*Jackson's Narrative.*

At a meeting of the rebel chiefs, held at Carrickbyrne Camp, on the 1st June, 1798, after unanimously electing Beauchamp Bagenal Harvey to be the Commander-in-Chief of the United Army of Wexford, "It was likewise agreed that Edward Roche, should from and after the first day of June instant, be elected, and is hereby elected a general officer of the United Army of the county of Wexford." Harvey appears to have been deposed from his military command on the 8th of June.

After taking the command at Vinegar Hill, Roche issued the following proclamation, which was printed, and circulated through the country:—

"Dear Fellow-citizens,

"The world with astonishment beholds, and future ages will record, the wonderful and brilliant victories achieved

of Garret Byrne, where we joined the army under General Roche, and received regular orders. I was appointed to look to the night guards, and to station the picquets at the advanced posts, which having fixed to my satisfaction, and given them their orders how to act in case of attack, or the advance of any persons 1798.

by men almost wholly unacquainted with military tactics, and hardly able to find men to lead them on to conquer. But what force is there can withstand the arms of citizens fighting for liberty!—You see that by our exertions, almost the whole country is in our possession; but a few more struggles and the day is our own. Your brethren in different parts of the kingdom have only been waiting for the signal, and you will see them flocking to the standard of liberty by thousands. Unanimity is what I have chiefly to recommend to you, with subordination and steady obedience to the commands of your officers, by which means you will insure success, and soon will see the downfall of that government which has long been tottering under the weight of its own crimes and enormities, under the torture and burthen of which you have so long groaned; but at the same time let me beg of you to be particular in your conduct towards your prisoners; remember numbers whom you have in your possession may not be guilty through principle, but through necessity; remember they may have been forced to appear against us, for the sake of getting their bread, when their hearts have been with us; remember that this is not a war for religion but for liberty, that there are a great number of men who are Protestants who wish well to the cause in which we are engaged. Let the speech of the Protestant Bishop of

1798. whatever, I thought it a good opportunity to release Pilsworth, the prisoner. I sent for him, and after some conversation, I found he was still apprehensive of danger, but I desired him to trust in God, who always befriended the innocent and would protect him. I wrote a pass for him, gave him money to pay his way

Down in the Irish House of Lords, when the famous Roman Catholic Bill was sent in, never be forgotten, but sink deep in all your hearts, &c. (Signed) "EDWARD ROCHE,
"General of the United Army of the County of Wexford, fighting in the cause of liberty.
"Vinegar Hill Camp."

The day previous to the battle of Vinegar Hill, General Roche appears to have exerted himself at Wexford to bring up the rebel forces to this point, and as far as was in his power to have restrained the murderous hands of his brother-in-law Thomas Dixon. [See note, p. 72.]

After the defeat experienced by the rebels at Vinegar Hill, on the 21st June, Edward Roche did not take a very active part in the insurrection. His brother, Philip Roche, a Roman Catholic priest, was tried and executed with the rebel Keugh at Wexford on the 25th June. On the surrender of Edward Roche, in December, 1799, he was tried by a court martial in Wexford, on the charge of "aiding and abetting the murders on the bridge on the 20th June, 1798." "But," says Hay, in rather an obscure vindication, "his humane exertions appeared so meritorious before that tribunal, that he was acquitted of this charge, which could not possibly be, as he possessed command, had it not been perfectly proved,

to Dublin, and then sent William Lannin and another man to conduct him safely past the out-posts. I took my leave and wished him a safe journey.* 1798.

The next day we learned that the enemy was in full march from Rathdrum in quest of us, on which we moved slowly to Redena Hill, where we took up a position, and shortly after the enemy appeared over Aughrim. With my glass I could form a pretty correct notion of their

that such command was merely nominal, as his orders and endeavours were counteracted by persons having no command whatever, but what arose from inflammatory addresses to the populace, urging them to take exemplary vengeance of their enemies, in which they were unfortunately but too successful."

Edward Roche, according to Taylor, appeared at his trial in ordinary clothes, with "two large gold epaulets and a silk sash and belt." He was sentenced to transportation, and, adds Taylor, "was accordingly sent to Newgate in Dublin with other convicts; but before the vessel was ready to convey them to their destination, he, with some others, died suddenly; and it was thought they had taken poison."

* In Holt's original manuscript, the following observation occurs:—"I never heard more of him till I was a State prisoner in the Castle of Dublin, and said John O'Neill taken; the same young man (Pilsworth) was sent for to identify him, and state what he knew concerning Neill, and in presence of Major Sirr, he stated verbatim what I have related concerning him."

1798. numbers, which did not exceed two hundred men. I asked the General what he thought of doing, as no time was to be lost in making our dispositions either for attack or defence. He said they had two field-pieces, which would play heavily upon us. I replied, that, if with eleven thousand men we were to be afraid of two hundred, we had better give up the business at once. We never could expect a victory, and our fate would be to be driven like grouse from hill to hill. I offered with my regiment to take the front, and lead the attack, and that the General should form the army into two bodies to support me in case of necessity.

Roche wavered and was evidently unequal to his task, if not a coward. He was ignorant of all idea of military movements. Ammunition was said to be scarce, and a hundred reasons were given to prevent fighting. Seeing that he had no wish to fight, I got angry, and told him and those who sided with him, that "cowardice always made ammunition scarce." Madge Dixon,* a woman of great bravery, abused Roche

* The wife of Thomas Dixon, a rebel Captain, compared by Gordon to Robespierre; and Madge Dixon, "if possible, was more sanguinary than himself," to use the words of Taylor.

to his face, called him a coward, and offered to lead a party against the enemy. 1798.

She was the sister of the rebel General Roche, and married Dixon "the son of a publican in Castlebridge near Wexford." Thomas Dixon had been "bound as an apprentice to a tanner in New Ross, but not liking that business, he went to sea, and in some time was appointed master of one of his brother's vessels, who was an opulent merchant in Castlebridge. During the rebellion he was noted for cruelty and cowardice, and had been the means of shedding torrents of Protestant blood."—*Taylor's History of the Rebellion in Wexford.*

Jackson relates that Mrs. Dixon proceeded to Artramont, the seat of Colonel Le Hunte on the Slaney, about four miles from Wexford, where she "went into the drawing-room, in which there happened to be orange furniture, and two orange fire screens, painted with emblematic figures. She immediately spread the alarm, that she had at last discovered where the Orangemen held their lodge, and had actually found their colours. The figure of Hope leaning upon an anchor, she said, signified their intention of burning the sailors on red-hot anchors; Vulcan and the Cyclops showed the manner in which little children were to be burned; and Justice with her eyes blindfolded, was to signify, that before they were burned, their eyes would be put out. This strange explanation spread like wildfire, and in a short time the whole of the town of Wexford [then in possession of the rebels] was alarmed, and the people went out in a body to meet Mrs. Dixon, who came riding upon a horse with the two fire screens borne before her. In this form, the mob roaring and shouting in the most horrid manner, they proceeded to Mrs. Parker's, where Colonel Le Hunte resided; they instantly seized and dragged him into the street, and a

1798. There was no time for humbugging. I found the General would give no orders, or did not

thousand voices at once cried out to have his blood. At this critical moment Father Broe, a Roman Catholic priest, appeared, and forcing his way through the crowd, came up to the Colonel, and declared to those nearest him, that he should not be put to death, till he had been taken to the gaol and tried. To this, by the most strenuous exertions, he at last prevailed upon them to consent."

During the scene of confusion which took place in Wexford on the 21st June, when a few loyalists entered the town, and created a panic which made the rebels fly in all directions, the sanguinary Dixon, who acted as master of the ceremonies in the horrid butcheries which had been committed in Wexford, and whose love for human blood and torture seems never to have been sufficiently satiated, "rode through the streets, with a broadsword drawn, and upbraided the rebels for their timidity and their dilatoriness; and said, 'if you had followed my advice in putting all the hereticks to death three or four days ago, it would not have come to this pass.'" Mrs. Dixon, who, like her husband, revelled in the dreadful scenes of carnage over which he presided, and who more than once waded ankle deep in human gore, "accompanied him on horseback," on this occasion, according to Musgrave, "with a sword and a case of pistols; clapped the rebels on the back and encouraged them, by saying, 'We must conquer,' and she exclaimed repeatedly, 'My Saviour tells me we must conquer!'

"They repaired to the bridge to stop the retreat of the rebels, but in vain, though Mrs. Dixon drew a pistol and swore vehemently that she would shoot any one of them who would refuse to return with her to put the remainder of the

know how to conduct us, and that if we waited for him we should soon be dispersed. I ordered my own men to prepare for battle, and the green flag of Wicklow was unfurled, on which I declared that I hoped to have the field-pieces, with their ammunition. We advanced upon the enemy, determined to attack them. They fired two shells at us, which did not fall within one hundred and fifty perches of us. We then proceeded towards them, and but for the misconduct of Garrett Byrne, I think we should have cut them off. But he did not advance across the hill with the quickness I had directed, and the enemy got safe through a pass where we might have destroyed them. Their trumpet sounded a retreat, and off they went. 1798.

The people were dissatisfied with the conduct of our General, and he lost their confidence. Some openly accused him of cowardice, others

hereticks to death. They endeavoured to raise the portcullis of the bridge to prevent their retreat, but were unable to do so."—*Musgrave.*

Taylor concludes his account of Dixon and his wife, by stating, that " wherever they secreted themselves, they never could be found, though a large reward was offered for their apprehension."

1798. defended him, but the difference of opinion produced a strong indisposition to follow him in future, which was soon indicated by decided marks of insubordination. A man named John Arundel, belonging to my regiment, was the same evening ordered by the General to be placed on a certain duty. He remonstrated, saying he had been on guard all night, and thought the orders should have come through his commander, Colonel Holt, to whose corps he belonged, and who knew best what men had been on duty, and whose turn it was to take the guard. General Roche drew a pistol from his belt, and discharged it at the man's head; the ball passed through the crown of his hat, but did him no injury.

One Cullen, my standard bearer, told me of this business, and I immediately went to the General and found him sitting with Garrett Byrne, Captain Perry, and Colonel Fitzgerald. They requested me to sit down, but I declined, and then declared the object of my visit was to demand satisfaction for an outrage committed by General Roche, who interfered with my command, by giving orders to my people without passing them in the re-

gular way through me, and then fired a ball through the crown of Arundel's hat, which I considered an insult to myself, and would not submit to. I was ready to obey him as my commander, but would not submit to insult, or suffer my men to be assassinated, or even punished without due examination and trial. The General, at first, affected to deny the charge, but I had the man to prove it; and I demanded satisfaction by an exchange of shots, which he declined. The gentlemen present interfered, and begged me to be reconciled; this I refused, and retired from them, and kept my own men separate from the rest of the army. This conduct made me popular with my people, who finding I was steady in protecting them, declared their determination to obey no other commander. 1798.

The next morning we marched to Wicklow Gap, and from thence to Moneyseed, where we halted. We were much in need of refreshment, and sudden death awaited the poultry; as we went along old and young suffered a common fate; they were plucked as we marched, and the leeward side of our line of march was marked by the feathers of the unfortunate

1798. cocks and hens, turkeys, geese, ducks, and chickens. The Wexford people were very kind and civil to us, and supplied us with every thing we stood in need of. One young man came to invite me to the house of Knox Grogan, Esq.* where I was sumptuously entertained, and was enjoying myself with mulled wine and other delicacies, when one of my men came to me with orders from General Roche, to attend him immediately.

I was soon at his tent; he told me the enemy were approaching, and he wished me to take the command for the day. My answer was, "General, I shall endeavour to do my duty, and I hope the Almighty will give me strength and ability, to direct the movements of the army so as to secure a favourable result."

30th June. I ordered all the officers to be at the head

* Captain Knox Grogan, or Grogan Knox, and his brother Captain John Grogan, were both officers of yeomanry and active loyalists. The former was killed by the rebels in a charge at the battle of Arklow, 9th June, 1798. They were the younger brothers of Mr. Cornelius Grogan of Johnstown, a Protestant gentleman of large fortune, who had represented the town of Enniscorthy in Parliament, and was tried and hanged as a rebel at Wexford, with Mr. Bagenal Harvey, on the 28th June, 1798.

of their respective corps, to form them twelve deep, and then to wait for orders. The enemy were about a mile distant at this time. I then ordered five hundred of the best musket men to form my advanced guard, and one thousand pikemen to follow close. I next examined the road by which the enemy were to advance, and soon determined on the point where we would receive the enemy. I caused three horses in cars to be placed across the road, and fastened them securely, so as to obstruct the passage, and stationed one hundred musketmen behind them. I had one thousand musketmen in reserve. The hedges on each side of the road were thick and strong of crab and thorns, and the dykes were five feet deep, so that a man would scarcely appear above them. I ordered the pikemen to make passages in the hedges, so that they might easily retire, or advance as occasion should require: and soon had all my preparations complete. With my advanced guard I met the enemy, keeping all my other people out of sight, and commenced firing, and then we retreated as fast as we could, as I had directed, and every thing had the appearance of a panic. 1798.

1798. The enemy who were cavalry, were sure they had it all their own way, and had but to push on and cut down all before them, and they advanced upon us bravely, but with too much confidence. When they reached the cars, I brought my musketmen round upon them, who fired on their rear with murderous effect, put them into disorder, and they finding themselves surrounded and falling in great numbers, were in a real panic. The pikemen now advanced through the hedges, and my reserve coming behind them, it was all up with the King's troops, and in less than twenty minutes, there were three hundred and seventy of them slain. Our loss was but four wounded.*

* The affair of Ballyellis, in which several of "the Ancient Britons," a corps extremely hated by the Irish peasantry, were cut off, first gave Holt a military reputation, although his assertion as to the slaughter of so many as three hundred and seventy of the King's troops, is altogether improbable. For the purpose, however, of enabling the reader to institute a comparison between Holt's account and the statements before the public, extracts are subjoined from the histories of two writers on the loyal side (Taylor and Musgrave), and two (Gordon and Hay) whose accounts are considered to be favourable to the Insurgents.

I. Taylor makes the total number killed forty-six, twenty-five of whom were Ancient Britons, with many wounded, and

A black trumpeter was most tenacious of life, 1798.
he took more piking than five white men. Before he expired, a fellow cut off his ears for the sake of the gold rings, and put them in his

adds that the rebels were subsequently attacked and "a number of them killed." But this probably refers to the proceedings on the 5th July.

II. Gordon says fifty-five men were slain, of whom twenty-eight were Ancient Britons, without any loss on the rebel side.

III. Sir Richard Musgrave admits that sixty royalists were killed, with two officers, whom he names, but states, that afterwards twenty to thirty rebels were killed.

IV. Hay asserts that the King's troops lost about eighty, among whom were two officers, and that "the insurgents lost not a single man in this action." Hay's statement seems to confirm the anecdote related by Holt respecting the black trumpeter.

"Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, preserving at once a commendable respect for truth, and a delicacy towards Government, has published, in the Shrewsbury paper, a list of the killed and wounded of the Ancient Britons, which is unfortunately a *little longer* than the *official return.*"—*Courier Newspaper, 4th August*, 1798.

I. "On the 30th June, information was brought to Gorey that the insurgents were advancing in some force towards Carnew, a small town on the borders of the counties of Wicklow and Wexford, but situated in the former. General Needham, with the troops under his command, was then encamped on Gorey-hill, and being apprised of this circumstance, ordered out a reconnoitering party of the Ancient British cavalry, and some of the yeomanry. After marching

1798. pocket. The trumpeter, during his torture, exclaimed * * * * pass-words of a United Irishman.

I saw a young boy from one of the dykes pass

a few miles, they were joined by a detachment of the 5th Dragoon Guards, and some other troops under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Puleston of the Ancient Britons, which made them nearly one hundred and fifty strong.

"As the patrole advanced, they met a woman who informed them that the rebels were near Ballyellis, and that they had not much ammunition. The Colonel, turning to his men, swore he would cut them in pieces; and making all speed, he descried them coming along the side of Kilcaven hill. When the rebels saw the cavalry advancing in so rapid and incautious a manner, they instantly quitted the high way, and lay down under cover of a hedge, till the army should come up; having to all appearance abandoned their horses, baggage, cars, and wounded, which they had brought from the battle of Hacket's-town. The ditch behind which the rebels lay to the right, was very high, while on the left was a wall, with a deep dyke between it and the road. When the patrole came up, the rebels opened on them a tremendous fire of musquetry, while they were so securely sheltered that the cavalry could do no execution, being obliged to gallop stooping under cover of the hedge.

"Not being sufficiently cautious to avoid the cars, they rode against and overthrew some of them; those in the rear pressing forward at the same time, and being also obliged to stoop, could not look before them, nor suddenly stop; they therefore tumbled men and horses one over the other, whilst some of the horses' feet got fastened in the shafts of the cars,

his pike into the side of a soldier, and could not extract it again; the soldier fell dead. The boy took from his pocket a purse with thirty-five guineas in it, some of the plunder he had 1798.

so that the road was strewed with men and horses, plunging and tumbling about.

"The rebels taking advantage of this confusion rushed on them, piked and shot twenty-five Ancient Britons, eleven of the 5th dragoons and eight of the yeomanry, with two loyalists, who went out with the patrole, besides wounding many. The remainder passed on through Carnew, and by taking another route got back to Gorey. During this transaction, the Wingfield dismounted cavalry and infantry under the command of Captain Gowan, came up with the rebels, and having no particular uniform, the enemy thought they were part of their own forces; but the yeomanry seeing their opportunity, attacked them with great spirit, killed a number of them, and then retreated to Gorey, without the loss of a man. By the defeat of the patrole the rebels acquired a supply of arms and ammunition; and knowing that Carnew was in a feeble state of defence, they resolved on attacking it; but after an uninterrupted contest of two days they were repulsed by its gallant yeomanry, who killed a number of them, and drove the rest into the country. The town of Carnew was, however, destroyed."—*Taylor's History of the Rebellion in Wexford.*

"II. A body of those rebels who had disturbed the county of Kilkenny, and fled through that of Wexford to the Wicklow mountains, finding their associates repulsed at Hacketstown, and seeing no prospect of success in that quarter, marched back, joined by many others, under the conduct of Garret Byrne, toward the county of Wexford, intending to surprise

1798. made the day before. One of the boy's comrades instantly seized the purse, and tried to take the money from him. He cried out to me, and I caused his well earned prize to be re-

the garrison of Carnew in their way. On the 30th June, intelligence being brought to the army encamped at Gorey, where General Needham commanded, of a formidable body of rebels being in motion, two hundred cavalry were detached, mostly regulars, partly yeomen under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Puleston of the Ancient Britons, supported by an excellent body of infantry. This party of cavalry coming within sight of the rebels, and observing them in full march on the road to Carnew, ought to have watched their movements at a moderate distance, and sent advice thereof to the camp; but instead of this, with a most unaccountable temerity, when they were unsupported by the infantry who had been recalled, they galloped after the rebels to attack them.* The latter finding a combat unavoidable, after running full speed to escape, rushed from the road into the fields, and placing themselves behind the hedges and walls on both sides of the way, poured a terrible fire on the cavalry; who, unable either to retreat or to annoy the enemy, pushed forward toward Carnew; but by cars lying in the way, on which women belonging to the rebels had been carried, they were so retarded, and so long exposed to the guns of the enemy, that without killing one of their antagonists, they suffered the loss of fifty-five men slain, of whom twenty-eight

* "Why the infantry, whose support might have prevented this disaster, had been recalled by General Needham I cannot tell. Perhaps the cavalry would not have been so rash if they had not supposed the infantry still at hand to support them."—*Note by Mr. Gordon.*

stored; he presented me with it. I kept it for him, till I gave it to his father, one Gough, who lived near Clone, the residence of Charles Coates, Esq. 1798.

were Ancient Britons. The rest effected their escape to Carnew, and alarmed the garrison, who would otherwise have been surprised and cut to pieces, as they had taken no precautions of outpost or patroles. A malt-house, which had been spared from destruction when the rebels had burned the town, was the fortress into which the garrison had barely time to retire when the rebels appeared, who, after an ineffectual attack, in which they sustained some loss, pursued their march to Kilcavan hill."—*Gordon's History of the Rebellion of* 1798.

Sir Richard Musgrave's account of this affair is as follows:—

"III. As that column [of rebels] still continued to infest the country contiguous to Gorey, General Needham, on the morning of the 30th June, sent Hunter Gowan, captain of the Tinnahely cavalry, with a part of his corps, to reconnoitre near Moneyseed. From a hill near that town, about three o'clock in the morning, he perceived the rebels in a hollow under him, in very great force, having received great reinforcements since their flight from Vinegar Hill. He sent intelligence of it to General Needham, who ordered Colonel Puleston of the Ancient Britons to join him immediately, with detachments from his own regiment, the 4th and 5th dragoons, the Ballaghkeene, Gorey, and Wingfield yeomen cavalry. The latter, before the reinforcement arrived, killed eight or ten scattered rebels, and among them one Brien, who the day before went to General Needham, pretended to return to his allegiance, surrendered a pike, and in consequence of

1798. In this action, a horse of one of the soldiers received a wound of a pike in the haunch, which made him carry himself and rider over the barricade of cars we had formed in the road, and

it obtained a protection; but on that day he was armed with a musket.

"The rebels advanced to Tinnahely, and having turned off to Wingfield, burned the old mansion there, and then proceeded to Moneyseed, where our troops first got sight of them. From thence they pursued for two miles to a place called Ballyellis, where the rebels being closely pressed, placed their baggage and their cars in the road, and posted a number of pikemen in their front. As soon as our cavalry came in sight of them, at the turn of a road, they charged them with great impetuosity; but when they were within a short distance of them, the pikemen leaped over the hedges at each side, on which the horses in front were entangled in the cars; and those in their rear pressing on them, a shocking scene of confusion ensued, both men and horses were involved and tumbled over each other. The rebels fired on them from behind the hedges and a park wall which was near, and while they were in this state of embarrassment, killed numbers of them with their muskets, and piked such of them as happened to be unhorsed.

"Colonel Puleston, whose horse they shot or piked, was with difficulty saved by his men. Captain Giffard, of the Ancient Britons, and Mr. Parsons, Adjutant of the Ballaghkeene cavalry, who had served with reputation abroad, and about sixty privates of the military and yeomen were killed.

"I have been assured that this action would have been more fatal to the loyalists, but that the Wingfield corps, who were on the right, went through a lane to a hill which com-

thus he escaped to Carnew Malthouse, in which there was a company of infantry, who kept up an incessant fire upon us. I examined the place, and found it impossible for us to get 1798.

manded the rebels, whom they put into confusion by a well-directed fire, and of whom they killed from twenty to thirty."—*Musgrave.*

"IV. Disappointed by the repulse at Hacketstown, the remaining Wexford insurgents, in conjunction with their Wicklow associates, directed their march towards Carnew, which they were resolved if possible to carry; but General Needham being informed of their approach, detached a strong body of infantry, and about two hundred cavalry, from his camp at Gorey to intercept them.

"The cavalry alone, however, as the infantry were recalled, came up with the insurgents on the road to Carnew. These feigning a retreat, having timely notice of their approach, suffered the cavalry to pass until they brought them into an ambuscade, where their gunsmen were placed on both sides of the way, behind the ditches to receive them. At the first discharge they were utterly confounded, and being unable to give their opponents any annoyance, they attempted to retreat in great haste toward Carnew. But here they had to encounter another part of the plan of the ambush, for the insurgents rightly conjecturing, that when foiled they would attempt getting off in that direction, had blocked up the road with cars and other incumbrances, they were for some time exposed to the fire of the insurgents, and lost about eighty of their number, among whom were two officers, Captain Giffard, of the Ancient Britons, and Mr. Parsons, Adjutant of the Ballaghkeene cavalry; the rest effected their retreat to Arklow. The detachment was com-

1798. at them to expel them. I, therefore, determined to make a feint of retreating towards Slievebuoy,* hoping they would leave their fortress, which they accordingly did, and made a pretence of following us, but as soon as we gave them a volley, back they fled, and it was "The devil take the hindmost."

manded by Lieutenant Colonel Puleston, of the Ancient Britons, of whom twenty were among the slain. The animosity of the people against this regiment, which they charge of being guilty of great excesses, may be instanced in the case of a black trumpeter belonging to it, who fell into their hands alive on this occasion. When seized upon, this man loudly declared that he was a Roman Catholic, and besought them to spare him for the sake of his religion. But his deeds with which he was upbraided were too recent and too notorious, and he obtained no quarter. The insurgents lost not a single man in this action, but they were foiled in their design upon Carnew, the garrison of which being alarmed by the retreating cavalry, had just time to secure themselves in a malt-house before the approach of the insurgents, who, after an ineffectual attack, marched off to Kilcavan hill."—*Hay's History of the Wexford Insurrection.*

* Slievebuoy is a considerable mountain which rises conically south of Ballyellis, and nearly midway between it and the ancient city of Ferns. "It serves as a barometer to the peasants of this part of the country. Whenever the clouds rest upon its top, or, as they express it, 'when Slievebuoy puts on his black cap rain may be expected.'"

Three-fourths of my company never saw any of these men killed, and the only officer who appeared with me after the action, was Garret Byrne, who chided me for standing in the road exposed to the fire from the Malthouse. 1798.

It is very difficult for a man to do any effectual service with undisciplined people; not a fourth of those with us were obedient to orders when fighting was necessary, but slunk off like dastardly cowards, as they were, if they had an opportunity, and if not, they were sure to create a panic by running before the enemy. I found the cowardly rascals on Slievebuoy-hill, where I rated them soundly for their conduct, contrasting the behaviour of their fellows who carried themselves so well in the action. I call this the battle of Ballyellis. I was received by the Wexford gentlemen with acclamations of applause. They praised the bravery and skill with which the affair was managed, and contrasted the result with their own changeable and unmeaning proceedings, which had neither intention or plan, always on the defensive, yet never prepared to receive the enemy; quite forgetting or not knowing that dead men cannot attack, and that the

1794. surest defence is to cripple your enemy, and by anticipating his movements, to take from him the means of offence.

In a defensive warfare a man is driven to his expedients, and should make the best of his means. He who attacks may choose his ground, time, and circumstances. And this proves that ambuscade is the only successful practice for raw, undisciplined, or half disciplined troops, under officers ignorant of military economy. The conduct of the Wexford people on this occasion, and the incapacity of their General, clearly convinced me that it was all over with them, and that they would soon be put down; and that all their leaders who escaped the sword, or the bullet, would die by the halter. As they were without judgment or common prudence in the management of their affairs, and would not have sense enough to make terms with the government, which was all they had to look to, I did not like to be mixed up with such blockheads, and I, therefore, determined to leave them. Mr. Byrne was employed to induce me to join them, and to march towards Wexford, to try and restore affairs there. He came to me for that purpose, but I declined, alleging as the reason, the wasted

state of the county, which was ravaged by the army, and had been so long convulsed, and was therefore so much distressed for provisions. I gave orders to hoist my colours,* and called on 1798.

* Holt's flag, I have been told, was made of green serge, about the size of a large pocket handkerchief; on one side the letters J. H. were marked in yellow paint, on the other a rude representation of a harp. In the account of the attack by the rebels on Arklow, 9th June, 1798, Musgrave relates, that "each company [of the rebels] had a green flag or colour about two feet square, with a yellow harp in the centre. Some, however, were party-coloured, and equal in size to the King's colours." The signification of the black flag which was displayed on the bridge at Wexford during the massacre of the loyalists, who were in the power of the rebels, (20th June, 1798), has been variously represented. A lady, whose diary is quoted by Sir Richard Musgrave, states that Mr. Patrick Redmond told her "that the black flag meant that every one of that party had taken the black test oath." "The black flag," says Musgrave, "was carried in procession again on the morning of the 21st June, by Thomas Dixon and his band of assassins, as a signal to murder the rest of the Protestant prisoners." According to Taylor's History of the Rebellion, "In the evening [of the 20th June] Dixon assembled the murdering band, and immediately hoisted that harbinger of destruction the Black Flag, which had on one side a bloody cross, on the other the initials M. W. S., that is, '*Murder Without Sin*,' signifying that it was no sin to murder a Protestant." In reply to these assertions, Mr. Hay says, "The black flag that appeared in Wexford on this day, [20th June, 1798], is among other things talked of with various chimerical conjectures, and its notoriety as denounc-

1798. all those to follow me who preferred being under my command.

July 2. I soon found myself at the head of one thousand and sixty men, with whom I immediately marched towards Wicklow Gap. We

ing massacre has been confidently recorded; notwithstanding that it is an absolute fact that this identical black flag was, throughout the whole insurrection, borne by a particular corps; and the carrying of banners of that colour was by no means a singular circumstance during that period, as flags of that and every other hue, except orange, were waved by the insurgents, and from their different dies, ingenious conjectures, however groundless, for the maintenance of prejudice, may be made as to the several dispositions of the bodies who moved under them, as little founded in fact or intention, as was the original destination of the black ensign in question."

To this I am enabled to add from the best authority, viz., a man who belonged to the rebel corps which carried the black flag in question, that the letters M. W. S. he believed had no other meaning than *Marksmen, Wexford, Shelmalier*— as the men from that barony were considered, and always acted as sharp-shooters to the main body of the insurgents, (termed by him the "Irish army.") His statement is fully borne out by Musgrave, who tells us that "in the attack on Arklow, their [the rebels] front rank was composed of those who had fire arms, and who were mostly from the barony of Shelmalier, on the Wexford coast, where they subsist during the winter by shooting barnacles and other sea fowl, which makes them expert marksmen."

The red cross, my informant said, he supposed was intended in memory of our Saviour's death upon the cross, but that he did not recollect it on his colours.

halted that night at a small village. On the 3d we again marched through the mountainous country from Ballymanus and Ballycurragh to Aughavanagh, where we halted to refresh ourselves, and from thence proceeded by the head of Glenmalure,* by the Three Lough Mountain to Knockalt, and from thence to my old quarters at the Whelp Rock. 1798. July 3.

About four, P. M., the inhabitants waited upon me to pay their respects, and tender me their services, but with most of them it was more from fear than affection, which I understood perfectly well, and acted accordingly.

Having sent out a party to forage, prepare our

* "The wild vale called Glenmalure, [i. e. the glen of much ore,] has been long celebrated in a historic point of view, as the asylum and strong fastness of Teagh Mac Hugh O'Byrn or O'Bryn, upon whom Spenser recommended Queen Elizabeth to bestow so much trouble and expense in endeavouring to hem him in by a circuitous disposition of troops. In the unhappy disturbances of 1798, Glenmalure was the scene of many deeds of blood. Mrs. Tighe has taken advantage of the great interest which a republican party must always possess, in the romantic point of view, of a political question, in her beautiful little poem of 'Bryan Byrne of Glenmalure,' which is to be found amongst the fragments attached to her larger work 'Psyche.'"—*Wright's Guide to the county of Wicklow.*

1798. commissariat, and secure a regular supply of provisions, I reviewed my men, and examined the state of their arms, ammunition, &c. I found myself well off in this respect, for I had taken a great many excellent horses* at the battle near Ballyellis, or Clough, with broad-swords, pistols, carbines, and a good supply of ball-cartridges and other stores, the whole of which fell into our hands. This placed me in a situation to cope with the whole combined yeomanry of the country, and indeed made us more than a match for them. James Kelly, the only man I believe of the party of cavalry who escaped at the battle of Ballyellis by his horse leaping over the barricades, deserted to me about this time, and gave me a full account of the matter.

I thought it necessary to reconnoitre the country round our encampment; as I had been some time absent, circumstances might have

* "The rebels in the county of Wicklow having got possession of a great number of horses belonging to the Ancient Britons, mounted a select body from among themselves on them, to which they gave the name of 'Ancient Irish,' and by which name it now appears they generally go."—*Courier Newspaper*, 12*th July*, 1798.

altered, and unpleasant neighbours have taken up their abode nearer than I approved, so I ordered twenty-four of my best cavalry to be ready at a certain hour, to attend me in a ride through the country, leaving directions what was to be done if an enemy appeared in my absence. 1798.

We crossed the commons of Broadlays to Ballyman, where we got some refreshment. From thence we went to the house of Mr. Bradley, who was from home; had he been there he would not have been injured. Mrs. Bradley gave the men plenty of drink. We took away a suit of her husband's military uniform, with his sword, and thirteen fat cows, which I ordered to be driven to our camp. We received information that there were at Cuddy Hornidge's,* two flitches of bacon and four sacks of oatmeal, which I instantly sent for; and likewise nine oxen, which we added to our drove,

* Query? Horneck, which appears to be a Wexford name. Two sons of George Horneck, of Girrane, were killed by the rebels on 30th May, 1798; one between Enniscorthy and Wexford, the other at Enniscorthy; and his brother, Philip, was murdered on Vinegar Hill. — *Musgrave's App.* xix. 9. According to Taylor, Philip Horneck was shot in front of Scullabogue house, during the time its barn was in flames.

1798. and then proceeded joyfully to our camp, and delivered the stores and cattle over to my commissary. I left my compliments for the old joker with the servants, the least I could do for the liberty I had taken with his bacon and his live stock.

As we showed towards Kilcullen we discovered a military station; they beat to arms on our approach, but did not quit their position. I now stationed my pickets half a mile farther from the camp, so that if alarmed their fire might give us timely notice of the approach of the enemy. I did not wish to be caught napping.

July 5. I had now been three days from the main body, which I left at Slievebuoy Hill; they had marched to Carrigrua, where they had been fiercely attacked by the king's troops, and put to flight in all directions.* They then sent me

* "The rebels fixed their encampment on a large mountain called the White Heaps, which separates the counties of Wexford and Wicklow. Here they remained till the morning of the 5th July, when two columns of the king's troops, under the command of Generals Sir James Duff and Needham, arrived, with an intention to surround the hill and make a general attack. The rebels having received intelligence of their purpose moved off the hill early in the morning, but they were met by Sir James Duff's column, and after a few

a despatch that 11,000 of their men were coming to join me. Supposing that as usual they would not be over well fed, it became necessary for me to make some provision for so numerous a company of visitors, and I determined not to be niggardly in hospitality, especially as the country about me was not destitute of the good 1798.

cannon shot retreated. Sir James pursued the flying enemy, but General Needham's column was at too great a distance for his infantry to assist; however, his cavalry, (which were chiefly yeomen), joined in the pursuit, which continued for twelve miles, when they were stopped by some rising grounds, but the regiments under Sir James Duff coming up with their curricle guns, the rebels, after a short contest, were again put to flight with considerable loss, and dispersed all over the country. The loss of the army was six men killed and sixteen wounded. The chief part of the enemy fled to Carrigrua Hill, but they had not been there quite an hour when they were driven from that station by the King's County Militia, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel L'Estrange, which was at that time encamped at Ferns, about four miles from the hill. From Carrigrua the main body of the rebels retreated to a mountain called Slievebuoy, near Carnew, where they formed a sort of camp; but here they met with such hardship that numbers of them died from absolute want and fatigue, while many of them deserted the standard of rebellion, and availing themselves of the merciful proclamation issued by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council, returned to their homes to enjoy the blessings of that Constitution which they had laboured to overturn."—*Taylor's History of the Rebellion in Wexford.*

1798. things of this life, or the means of employing hungry fellows' jaws, with considerable advantage to their strength and spirits.

I wanted camp-kettles, and therefore took the liberty of borrowing two large metal boilers from Mr. Radcliff's factory at Ballynahoun, in each of which I could cook six hundred weight of beef. I next sent my compliments to Mr. Finnamore for seventy-nine head of cattle, which were soon in the possession of the commissary, with seven calves, six large swine, and a quantity of oatmeal and potatoes. I then caused all the houses within four miles round to be searched for salt, pepper, and spices, and thus obtained a fair supply of things necessary for the body. I now set the butchers to work, and put the beef into turf kishes. With the advantage of a dry summer* we had plenty of fuel,

* The summer of 1798 was remarkable from no rain having fallen for several weeks, a circumstance of rare occurrence in Ireland. "Such was the blindness of their [the rebels] minds, as to imagine that the extraordinary fine weather which continued so long, was sent by the Almighty to favour their cause. They would say, 'God is on our side, the heretics have had dominion long enough, but our time is now come.' It was also their opinion that no rain would fall until they had finally conquered."—*Taylor's History of the Rebellion in Wexford.*

and but little trouble in cooking. The beef was cut into small pieces and boiled, and when done was taken out and replaced in the turf kishes, and more beef put into the hot water, which became excellent soup, and was saved in tubs and casks. 1798.

When my formidable company joined, I was able to give them a hearty meal of wholesome food, which satisfied their hungry stomachs, and revived their languid, depressed, and discomfited spirits. Poor devils! they presented a melancholy picture of wretchedness and woe, but the news of beef and soup, and the entertainment I had prepared for them renovated their almost exhausted powers, and made them men again. They had not been used to be taken care of,

"The rebel warfare," says the Rev. James Gordon, "was favoured by an uninterrupted continuance of dry and warm weather, to such a length of time as is very unusual in Ireland at that season, or any season of the year. This was regarded by the rebels as a particular interposition of Providence in their favour; and some among them are said to have declared in a prophetic tone, that not a drop of rain was to fall until they should be masters of Ireland. On the other hand, the same was considered by the fugitive loyalists as a merciful favour of heaven, since bad weather must have miserably augmented their distress, and have caused many to perish."

1798. and were much left to their own resources; due forethought, therefore, was a surprise upon them, it was as welcome as it was unexpected. The poor creatures were delighted. I increased my popularity by ordering that the new comers should do no duty till they were recovered from their fatigue.

I then set about instructing them in military manœuvres, by sham battles, shewing them how to use pikes against guns, and the advantage pikemen, if steady, had against cavalry, and told them to remember Ballyellis malt-house; that the pike, in a charge, was much superior to any other weapon. Thus, I instilled into them a confidence in their own strength they had never before felt.

A great many persons came with the fugitives who called themselves officers, but General Roche was missing. Twenty-four of the said officers consulted with me what was best to be done. I proposed to march upon Newtown Mount Kennedy, where there were two field-pieces and plenty of ammunition, which we could easily make ourselves masters of; then to march to Wicklow, release the prisoners there, and from thence to proceed to Dublin.

My plan was opposed by Father Kearns,* who proposed that we should march upon Clonard, 1798.

* Described by Gordon as "a man of extraordinary stature, strength, and ferocity."

"This reverend gentleman was at Paris in the year 1794, when, in the administration of Robespierre, the French were extirpating the Romish Clergy. He was actually hung up at Paris, but the weight of his body (as he was of a huge stature), bent the iron of a lamp post, to which he was suspended, so much, that his toes touched the ground, and prevented animal life from being extinguished. An Irish physician, who perceived this, had him conveyed to his house and recovered him. Having fled to his native country, he was appointed curate of a chapel near Clonard.

"From the vehemence with which he unremittingly inveighed against French Republican principles, and the warm encomiums which he bestowed on our Constitution, he was regarded as a steady loyalist and a good subject; in consequence he was well received, and even at times domesticated in the houses of some of the most respectable gentlemen in the counties of Meath, Kildare, and the King's County."—*Sir Richard Musgrave's Irish Rebellions.*

Father Kearns was hanged at Edenderry, with Captain Perry, 21st July, 1798.

The anecdotes which are recorded of Kearns excite but little sympathy for his fate. Sir Richard Musgrave relates that Mrs. Tyrrell having fallen into the power of the rebels at Clonard, offered her carriage and horses to General Perry. "When they had proceeded about a mile, General Perry requested to join her in the carriage. Soon after a low fellow stopped it and got into it, saying, 'that he had a right to it, as it was he that first obtained it,' and notwithstanding the rank of General Perry he could not prevent his intrusion

1798. where we should much augment our numbers by our friends in that neighbourhood, and

nor check his insolence. At last one Kearns, a popish priest, rode up to the carriage, and as he had been kindly and hospitably entertained at different times by Mrs. Tyrrell, for a week together, she implored him to interfere in obtaining her release, but he coldly answered, by saying, 'Oh! yes, Madam,' and having retired she saw no more of him. At last Mrs. Tyrrell was liberated by a Captain Byrne, [Garret Byrne of Ballymanus], and permitted to return to her family at Clonard, but on foot."

On the march to Lacken Hill, near Ross, Father Kearns, says Sir Richard Musgrave, made the rebels "halt at Newbawn chapel, about a mile from Scullabogue, where he said mass for them, having a broad cross-belt and a dragoon's sabre under his vestment. The rebel chiefs knelt round the altar, from which Kearns, when mass was over, endeavoured to exhort the rebels in the same strain that Murphy and Roche used at Vinegar Hill and Carrickbyrne; but the current of his eloquence was soon stopped by ebriety, his illiterateness, his gross ignorance and vulgarity."

Taylor, in his "History of the Rebellion in Wexford," mentions that on the retreat of the loyalists from Gorey on the 22d June, 1798, James Rowsome "was overtaken by Perry and his men; knowing who he was, they were on the point of piking him, but Perry desired them to forbear, and leave him for those who were coming after. Priest Kearns soon came up with another body of rebels, and asked him his name: he told him, and then Kearns desired him to lie down till he should shoot him. Some of the rebels were going to dispatch him their own way, but Kearns prevented them, saying he would do him the honour to dispatch him himself. He snapped his pistol at him, but it missing fire, the rebels were

acquire a good store of ammunition. It went to a poll, and a majority of two decided in favour of Father Kearns. 1798.

We then completed our ball cartridges, and having all things in readiness, we commenced our march about eleven o'clock at night. Our

again for piking him, but the priest very deliberately put fresh powder in the pan, and ordered him not to stir, telling him he would now do his business. He accordingly fired, the ball passed through his chin and upper lip, and came out at his neck, tearing him in a shocking manner. Here they left him weltering in his gore. After some time he crept off the road, and lay for a while hid in some fern in an adjoining field, where two rebels found him, and asked him, 'if he was not yet dead?' He said 'Not, but almost.' One of them said it should not be long until he would, on which he fired at him; the ball broke one of his arms. The other rebel would not fire, having but one charge, but got a large stone and beat the poor sufferer on the head, until no appearance of life was left. Here he lay until near day-light, when recovering a little strength he crossed the country to Benough, to a friend's house, in whose pig-house he lay two days and two nights without nourishment, except some milk and water. But on the arrival of the king's troops at Gorey he was conveyed on the provision carts to the military hospital at Bray, where he remained some months till cured, and is now living a monument of the sparing mercy of God. Of all the objects I have seen," adds Taylor, "he is one of the greatest, having lost all his under teeth and the bones of his chin, his jaw is locked, his under-lip split from the point to the swallow; he cannot take any sort of food but what is administered through the medium of a spoon."

1798. number on the roll was 13,780 men. By the time we arrived at Prosperous,* we had lost by desertion 2500. We halted at this place, and refreshed. While here, our picquets brought us word that a party of military were approaching us. I went to reconoitre them, and finding they were only a few cavalry, I ordered 200 men to attack them, but they moved off at the rate of a fox-hunt.

We had here to march by a road through a bog, across which a gulf was cut to render it impassable without a bridge, and we had no time to construct one. I had, therefore, recourse to an expedient which offered itself to my mind at the moment. We had taken a great quantity of cattle from a man named Wolfe, and others, and I ordered them to be driven with great precipitancy into this gulf, and this mass tumbling in filled up the gulf so as to enable some to scramble over, and the army following them, we crossed in safety and without delay. We halted at a village called Robertstown,† where, having

* In the county of Kildare, about fifteen Irish miles from Dublin.

† Also in Kildare, about twenty-one Irish miles from Dublin, the Grand Canal passes by it from Dublin to Monasterevan.

refreshed ourselves, we advanced on Clonard.* 1798. 11 July.

Here we divided. I headed a corps of about 3000 men, and determined to attack a guard-house† at the foot of the bridge, which had a garrison. There was a small house opposite, and a millrace which I had to cross. We pro-

* On the borders of the county of Meath, twenty-five Irish miles west of Dublin.

† "Fortified houses," observes the Rev. James Gordon, in a note on this affair, "with garrisons of about twenty well-appointed men, appeared to be impregnable against the rebels when destitute of cannon. From a reliance on this, two houses in the county of Kildare, near Dunlaven, were retained in defiance of the insurgents, during all the rebellion."

"From Prosperous," says Gordon, "the ill-associated confederates marched to Clonard, a village twenty-five miles westward of Dublin, on the river Boyne, with design to attack Athlone, and raise an insurrection in the western parts of the kingdom. Though they amounted perhaps in number to three thousand, they found so obstinate a resistance at Clonard from twenty-seven men under Lieutenant Tyrrell, a yeoman officer, in a fortified house, that they were delayed till the arrival of succours from Kinnegad and Mullingar, and obliged to abandon the attempt."

Sir Richard Musgrave gives the following minute account of the gallantry displayed by this handful of loyalists, against a rebel force more than one hundred times their numerical superiors.

"The rebels who escaped from our troops after the battle of Whiteheaps, fled into the county of Kildare, under the command of Garret and William Byrne, Edward Fitzgerald,

1798. 11 July. ceeded between the two houses without opposition, but on passing them the body under my command met a very warm reception from the

General Perry and Kearns, a popish priest, having been induced to join their fellow traitors there by Michael Reynolds, who being reinforced by them, was encouraged to undertake what he had long meditated, an attack on the little garrison of Clonard, defended by a few yeomen, commanded by Lieutenant Tyrrell of Kilrenny, High Sheriff of the county.

"A report having prevailed that they had this in contemplation, Lieutenant Tyrrell acted for some time on the defensive. At last about eleven o'clock on the morning of the 11th of July, his nephew, Mr. Richard Allen, who was a member of his corps, galloped into the yard and announced that he had been closely pursued by a large party of rebels, that he narrowly escaped being taken, and that he was sure they were advancing to Clonard.

"It unfortunately happened that some of the guards were absent, not having the most remote suspicion that the garrison would be attacked. Lieutenant Tyrrell, notwithstanding his utmost exertions, could muster but twenty-seven men, three of whom were his own sons, the eldest not seventeen years old, the youngest but twelve. He had no sooner closed the gate of the court-yard than the firing began.

"Though Lieutenant Tyrrell had never acted in any military capacity, the coolness, the skill, the good sense, and energy of mind which he shewed in this critical and perilous situation would have done honour to a veteran. He stationed in a turret in the garden, which commanded the road by which the rebels were expected to advance, six of his corps, including Mr. Allen and his son, only fifteen years old. After fixing some other outposts, he retired into the barrack with

little garrison, which it was my intention to have surprised; but they were on the alert, and a few of my men fell by their first volley. 1798. 11 July.

the main body, of whom he selected the best marksmen, placed them at those windows from which they were most likely to annoy the enemy, and desired them not to fire without good aim.

"The advanced guard of the rebels, consisting of about three hundred cavalry, approached towards the turret in a full trot, without apprehending any danger. Their leader, one Farrell, was mortally wounded by the first shot fired by young Mr. Tyrrell: and the main body having been thrown into confusion by a general volley, fled out of the reach of their fire. The rebel infantry then coming up, passed by the turret under cover of a wall, and part of them having taken post behind a hedge maintained a constant fire on it, but without effect. The remainder joined another party who came by a cross road from a different quarter, for their object was to have surrounded the town. They then stationed a guard on the bridge to prevent any reinforcement from arriving in that direction. The marksmen from the windows soon dispersed and put to flight that guard, after having killed about a dozen of them. This proved afterwards to be of the utmost consequence to the little garrison, as it preserved a communication with the western road.

"The rebels, disappointed in their attack both on the house and the turret, resolved to make one desperate effort to storm the latter. A party of them having penetrated into the garden, rushed into the turret. The yeomen stationed there had the precaution to draw up through a trap door the ladder by which they ascended to the loft. The rebels endeavoured to mount it on each other's shoulders, but were constantly

1798. 11 July. Garret Byrne and Fitzgerald were sent to support me in this attack. Byrne observing the danger I was placed in, cried out, "Holt, is there any use for you to get yourself and your men killed?" This no doubt had its effect upon

killed in the attempt. Some fired through the floor, others drove their pikes through it, but without effect. The rebels persevered in the attempt with inflexible obstinacy, though twenty-seven of them lay dead on the ground floor. At last they set fire to a large quantity of straw under the turret, which was soon in flames.

"Two of the besieged, Mr. George Tyrrell and Mr. Michael Cusack, were shot in endeavouring to make their escape by rushing through the smoke. The remainder eluded the vigilance of the rebels, and arrived safe to the main body, by leaping from a very high window, and passing under cover of a wall.

"Afterwards they set fire to the toll-houses and some cabins near the bridge, and threw some of the dead bodies into the flames, for the purpose of consuming them, lest their numbers should be known.

"The conflict had now lasted six hours, and the rebels seemed determined to maintain it; but very fortunately an event happened, which, at the same time that it depressed their courage, inspired the loyal garrison with renovated valour. One of the guard who had been excluded on the shutting of the gates in the morning, fled to Kinnegad and informed the garrison there of the perilous situation of his friends at Clonard; on which, eleven of the Northumberland Fencibles, under a serjeant, and fourteen of the Kinnegad infantry, under Lieutenant Houghton, marched for Clonard.

"Lieutenant Tyrrell with great gallantry sallied forth

the conduct of my party. It made them hesitate. Finding I could not get at the brave fellows on that side, I retreated and set two small houses on fire, the smoke of which kept us out of their view and fire. I then crossed 1798. 11 July.

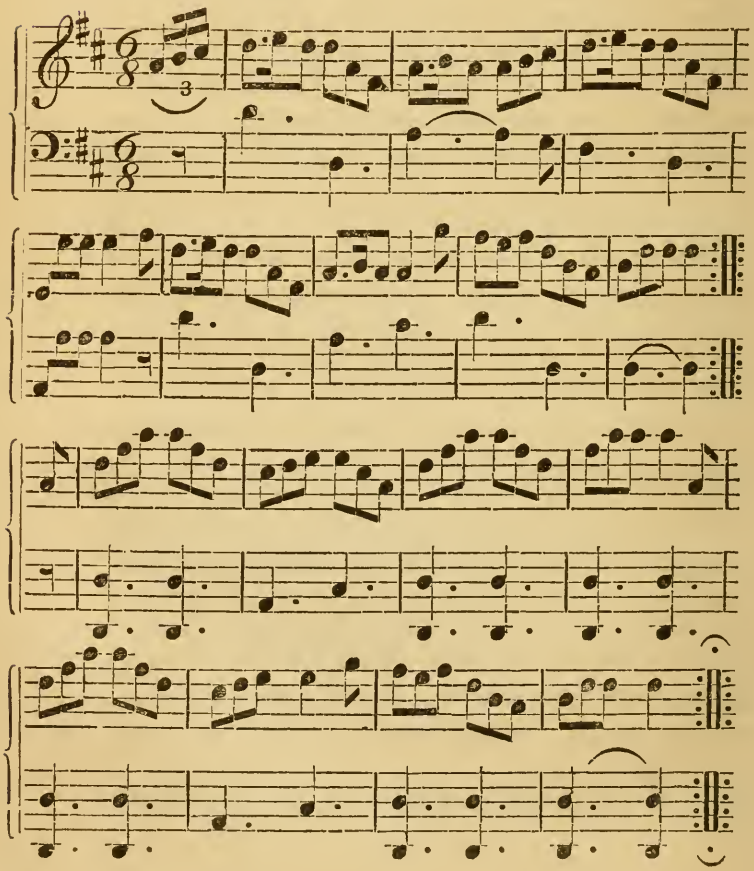
from the house and formed a junction with them. After posting this reinforcement in the most advantageous situation to gall the enemy, he, with a few picked men, undertook to drive the rebels from the garden, which about four hundred of them still continued to occupy. Some of them were on a mount thickly planted with fir-trees, which afforded them a protection, and prevented them from being seen: the remainder were intrenched behind a pivêt hedge. Lieutenant Tyrrell with great gallantry dislodged the latter, who fled to their friends on the mount.

"The conflict then became very warm, the rebels appearing determined to maintain this advantageous post; and the yeomen, but few in number, though six of them were badly wounded, and the remainder were overcome with fatigue, resolved to die sooner than retreat.

"Mr. Richard Allen received a ball which passed through his arm, and lodged in his side. [He died of his wounds.] At last Lieutenant Tyrrell's party, after having displayed prodigies of valour, routed the party on the mount, and drove them out of the garden, and the Northumberland and Kinnegad corps killed many of them in their flight. This victory obtained by a handful of loyalists over a numerous body of rebels, was one of the most splendid achievements performed in the course of the rebellion. No less than one hundred and fifty of the rebels were killed, and a great many wounded."

I may add that the Kinnegad infantry received, from their

1798. the bridge with but fifty men, and lost eight of them before I got over. As soon as I saw but little hope of gaining the garrison, I went to the

conduct in cutting down the rebels on this occasion, the soubriquet of "the Slashers," and the following lively melody, still popular in Ireland, was named "the Kinnegad Slashers," in complimentary commemoration of the achievements of that corps at Clonard :—

front of the barrack; the gates were very strong, but we forced them and got several loads of straw, which, after great exertions, and several attempts, we set on fire, with the intention of burning the barrack, but our efforts had not the desired effect. We then forced off the ceiling with our pikes, and at last succeeded in consuming the building. 1798.

We were shortly after attacked by the Flying Artillery. At the first discharge they killed eight of the fifteen men I had placed in a shrubbery, and they fired with such murderous effect that we were compelled to retreat. We were deficient in ball cartridge and ammunition, or we should certainly have been victorious on this occasion. Captain Perry and myself stopped with 500 men for some time, but finding success out of the question we retreated to Castle Carberry, where we halted and dressed our wounded.

Next morning we marched to Corebuoy Hill, where we were getting some provisions cooked, and preparing for further operations, when I discovered several of the people intoxicated and reeling about. I suspected the cause and went to the Commissary, and found the men had got

1798. at two puncheons of whiskey, and would soon all be in a helpless state. With the butt end of a musket I stove in the heads of both, and having spilled the contents discharged the sentinels. Many of the men, when they discovered what I had done, were so exasperated that they threatened me with instant death. I endeavoured to appease them, and several sensible fellows coming up to my support, told them that by what I had done I had saved their lives. They were at length brought to reason, with a threat of punishment for mutiny against their best friend. I went round to those that I saw had some reason left, and argued with them on the folly of men expecting to be attacked every instant, rendering themselves incapable of resistance.

In a few minutes after I heard the signal from our picquets that the enemy were advancing, but on calling to arms I had not more than 200 men in a fit state to fight; there were upwards of 500 men lying on the ground in a state of beastly intoxication, which produced such a panic in the rest that they began to fly in all directions. I did what I could to rally them and thus effected a retreat, leaving

the drunkards to their fate, who were bayoneted on the ground. 1798.

I was very much exasperated by the opposition I met with from my men, and their foolish conduct, and as I was almost as much intoxicated with passion as they were with whiskey, I ordered all the houses in our line of march to be burned, and was traced by the military from their smoke. Captain Dalton joined me with a few horsemen, and the Artillery advanced upon us, but we gave the troops a reception warmer than they wished. So many of our men, however, were fatigued and incapable of the resistance necessary, that many were shot by the military without offering any resistance. In crossing a ditch, the top of which gave way, my horse fell, and the soldiers being close upon me, I got up as speedily as possible, and made off towards my party; but before I reached them I received a slight wound in my head, and as I saw a great many falling around me, and that the military passed by all that fell to pursue the flying, I threw myself down by the side of a murmuring stream, where I lay bleeding. They passed me unnoticed, and I only heard one of

1798. them say, "There are a brave parcel of the devil's dead in all directions."

As soon as the military were got to a distance, I ventured to look about me, and saw a great crowd of women crying bitterly. The enemy spared no one, putting all indiscriminately to death. I thought I could not be worse off, so I ventured over the stream, and went up to a respectable looking woman. She was a yeoman's wife, and said to me, "Sir, I am sorry to see you in such a situation, go up to that house and make the girls take off your surtout, and they will wash it for you." I went to the house and she followed me, and brought me some spirits, bread, butter and cheese, and was very kind to me.

I was very thankful for her kindness, and gave her my silver-mounted sword, and told her where my horse would be found bogged. "Go there," said I to her, "and take the silver-mounted bridle, and you will find also my case of silver-mounted pistols." She washed my head, and bound it with a handkerchief, and gave me a hat in exchange for my broken helmet, and dismissed me, saying, "My husband is a yeoman, but I hope you will escape." I

answered, that "the Almighty was able to save me, and could do more than that." The maid-servant, who had been set to watch, now came in, and said that she saw a body of police approaching the house. The good woman wished me every luck, and I retreated by the back of her garden, but had not proceeded far before I met eight of the police. I went up boldly to them, and asked them which way the army had gone. One of them very fiercely said, "What do you want to know about the army?" I answered that the rebels had robbed me, and taken my horse and hat, "and I hope if any gentleman gets him he will be returned to the lawful owner." "You are right," said one of the men, "it should be done." I showed them the wound in my head from a ball, and told them that I only escaped by pretending to be dead, and, perhaps, the approach of the army saved me, for the rebels all fled, leaving me on the ground. They pitied my misfortune, but said it was lucky for me it was not worse, to which I most cordially assented, and after a few more words we parted, most willingly on my side, and most grateful to Providence was I; and fervently did I return thanks. 1798.

1798. I now concluded that it was all for the better, and that all things might work together for my safety. I could see none of my people in any direction, and trying to find or follow them was out of the question.* The bog was clear of the

* "From the time of this repulse, the 11th July, the Wexfordians, finally separating from their less hardy associates, pursued unaided their plan of desperate adventure. Reduced to about fifteen hundred in number, and hunted in every quarter by various bodies of the king's troops, which were stationed every where around, they made a flying march from place to place, in the counties of Kildare, Meath, Louth, and Dublin, under the conduct of Fitzgerald, skirmishing with such parties of the royals as overtook or intercepted them.

"On the night of their repulse they plundered the village of Carberry in the county of Kildare, and marched the following morning by Johnstown, to a place called Summerhill, near Culmullin, in the county of Meath. Here, after having eluded the pursuit of some parties of the soldiery, particularly that of Colonel Gordon of the Inverness Fencibles, who had marched to seek them from Trim, they were attacked by Colonel Gough, with a body of troops from Edenderry, and obliged to fly with precipitation and the loss of their plunder. Totally disappointed in their hopes of assistance to their cause in the county of Meath, which had been so agitated by defenderism and rebellion, they by a circuitous and rapid march made their way to the river Boyne, which they crossed near Duleek into the county of Louth. Finding themselves overtaken on the 14th, by the cavalry of Major General Wemyss, and Brigadier General Meyrick, who were pushing them with two divisions of the army, they made a desperate stand

enemy, I began, therefore, to reflect on what was best to be done. I was completely out of my latitude, and never wanted a pilot more than at this time. I made my observations on the sun, and steered my course by it, and in a short time discovered a small cabin or house on the edge of the bog, which I approached. The owner was at home, and with him I got into conservation; he was kindly disposed, and very civil. I went into the house, and was surprised to find there an old woman from Newtown Mount Kennedy, the wife of Andrew Kearns,* 1798.

between the Boyne and the town of Ardee. On the arrival of the infantry and artillery to the assistance of the cavalry, who had been endeavouring to keep the rebels at bay, they broke and fled with some loss into a bog. Some of these adventurers directed their flight hence to Ardee, and dispersed, but the main body repassing the Boyne, marched with great celerity towards Dublin, perhaps with design to regain the Wicklow mountains. Being hotly pursued by Captain Gordon of the Dumfries Light Dragoons, with a body of cavalry followed by infantry, they were finally dispersed with some slaughter, at Ballyboghill, near Swords, in the county of Dublin, whence they severally endeavoured, by devious ways, to reach their homes or places of concealment." —*Rev. James Gordon's History of the Irish Rebellion.*

* In Holt's manuscript the name is spelled Carnes, but as this is the way Holt spells the name of Father Kearns, (see p. 99), I have assimilated the orthography in the text.

1798. who was, like myself, a shipwrecked and miserable being.

The man gave us instructions as to the roads of the country, and pointed out the way we should go. But we could scarcely hope to pass ourselves for any thing but our true characters, a pair of unfortunate forlorn rebels. My trust in my Redeemer was strong, and the recollection of the acts of mercy I had done to the unfortunate who had fallen into the hands of my people were now sweet and comfortable to me. I had saved their lives, restored them to liberty, had prevented the shedding of blood wherever I had an opportunity, and I trusted that such conduct would be pleasing to the Almighty, and that the measure which I meted to others would be vouchsafed to myself in my misery and distress. I never forgot the passage in the sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy," and that "the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers. The countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil, to root out the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the Lord

heareth them, and delivereth them out of all their troubles." 1798.

I could not consider rebellion, *in my case*, a sin, because I had no alternative. I must either have joined the rebels, or have been sacrificed by my enemies. My life must have fallen by my persecutors, as my house had been burned, and my property made away with. I had unwillingly taken the united oath, and I had no one to absolve me from it. I was too good a Protestant to break so solemn an obligation, even though keeping it was grief and pain to me. Most gladly would I have been fighting on the other side, could I have done so with a clear conscience; but an oath once sworn *is binding* for ever, at least I have not yet learned how I could be relieved from it. I despised the cowardice, duplicity, and cruelty of some of my colleagues; but there were many of them noble and generous spirits, who were let into the rebellion by circumstances over which they had no influence, and could not control in these unhappy times. The crimes of atrocious inhumanity, committed on both sides, were so dreadful, that I cannot trust myself with their

1798. description, nor could I find language competent to express the depths of iniquity or cruelty which the struggle produced, All the finer and better feelings of humanity were expunged from the hearts of those engaged in this terrible war. The sight of human blood seems to convert man into a savage monster; and once the hands are stained with the blood of our fellow-creatures, the thirst for it becomes an insatiable appetite, which it is impossible to restrain. I shall remember to my latest hour the delight I felt at having saved young Pilsworth's life.

Katty Kearns and I proceeded till night approached, when we lay down on a bank at the back of a quickset hedge, adjoining a gentleman's lawn, but we were much disturbed by bulls and oxen who annoyed us early in the morning, and kept smelling and bellowing about us, which determined me to move on. The first man we met was what I may call a friend. He shewed us a bye-path, which he thought we might follow with safety, and we soon reached a house by the side of the road, into which we entered, and were scarcely there before a corps of cavalry approached. The owner trembled at the sound of the horses' feet,

and said, if the troops had seen us, his life would have been forfeited as well as mine. 1798.

The poor woman gave us some buttermilk, and told us she had no better cheer, but the man promised to get me a good breakfast. He then took us into a field of wheat, which was at the back of his house, and desired us to remain there. About nine o'clock he came with a large jug of hot tea, bread, butter, and cold meat.

The reader may imagine how welcome was this providential supply. I had not tasted any thing for more than thirty hours. The man told me his landlord, John O'Neill, was a united Irishman, although he was in a corps of cavalry, and that he would come and see me. After our repast we lay down and slept soundly till about twelve o'clock, when Mr. O'Neill came to us.

He entered into conversation with me, and asked how it was that I should be in the wretched situation he found me. As well as I can recollect the following conversation passed between us :—

J. H.—It is impossible to account for the vicissitudes of life in ordinary times, but in these times no man is safe, nor can calculate upon

1798. a continuance of prosperity, or even of any course of life, for an hour. Men are driven into acts which were far from their thoughts a few hours before. In troublesome times men must go with the current whether they like it or not. I have read in history of the distresses of men of prudence and discretion, who, by the violence of the times they lived in, were driven into circumstances which they could neither contemplate or avoid. Like a whirlpool, the eddy of troublesome times sucks in great as well as small, to their destruction and against their wills. Such was my case. I was unwilling to leave my comfortable house and darling family, but was driven from it by the hand of tyranny, that civil law would have restrained, but martial law armed with power.*

Mr. O'Neill.—But the wretched creature of a woman,—what the devil brought her here?

Katty Kearns.—I followed my husband for fear of the soldiers.

Mr. O'Neill.—Well, your case is a melan-

* "Martial law," said Mr. Townsend, "would have no terrors, if it were not liable to take the worst mode of detecting guilt and of protecting innocence."—*Rev. James Gordon's History of the Irish Rebellion.*

choly one. God preserve you! I will send you refreshment, and my blessing go with you. Whatever you have done, you are now both to be pitied." 1798.

He then left us; and about an hour after he sent his man with a cold fowl, some boiled potatoes, bread and bacon, and a bottle of whiskey, with which Katty and I made a sumptuous feast. I cannot express the exquisite and savoury flavour which these things had. I returned thanks for this timely supply, but the whiskey had been nearly my ruin. Poor Katty got a second glass, and it made her so chatty, and indeed clamorous, that I feared her tongue would have led to a discovery, and I began to think of breaking the bottle, lest she should get any more. Indeed, Katty became a regular nuisance to me, and I was most anxious to be rid of her. We were near the road, and her talk must have been heard by all passers-by. However, after a little time she fell asleep and was quiet then.

After nightfall the poor man, among whose wheat we had sheltered ourselves, returned, bringing me a pistol and ten ball-cartridges, which reanimated me, and restored my confi-

1798. dence. He acted as a guide to us for nine miles, when he pointed out the house of a farmer who was a united Irishman, and wishing us safe, he returned. I went up to the house, accompanied by old Katty, whom I frequently wished at old Nick, or any where out of my way. It was about sunrise, when I rapped at the door; a voice answered—

"Who comes there?"

"A friend."

The man arose and admitted me. I passed the sign, which he acknowledged, and then brought me into an inner room, but desired Katty to sit in the kitchen, which irritated her not a little. She was not much more refined in her manners than a baboon, whose countenance indeed hers much resembled. However, she stayed in the kitchen, and some food was brought to me, with spirits and milk, nor was Katty without her share.

Night approaching, I wished to move onward, and my friend brought me to a place, where he thought he could leave me safely; he pointed out the house of a united Irishman, but one cautious and stubborn, who required firm and determined conduct. It was about eleven

o'clock, I rapped at the door, and was answered— 1798.

"Who comes there?"

J. H.—"A friend."

"You shan't come in."

J. H.—"You are a sworn man, and must admit me on pain of perjury, and if you do not obey, I will burn your house over your head, and you in your bed, as a perjured villain."

This I spoke in a voice as if I had a great company at my back, and it soon brought him to his senses; he cried out—

"Sir, I will get up and let *you* in."

Which he soon did. I instantly seized him by the neck, presented my pistol at his head, and said—

"Are you not a sworn united Irishman?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Then I will let you know your duty, you perjured wretch. March on before me."

The creature thought I was going to take his life, and begged for mercy. I told him I would spare him if he piloted me safely across the Boyne, to James Kennedy's house at Navan; but if I was attacked by the way he should die by the contents of my pistol passing through

1798. his head. I then commanded him to march before me, and we reached the house without the least interruption.

We arrived about sunrise; Kennedy took me to his barn; Katty wished to follow, but he ordered her into the house, and he placed me in a recess, behind a large heap of peas in the straw. As he was going out of the barn, two soldiers came up from Navan and saluted him. Kennedy asked them what news they had. They answered, "The rebels were all killed or dispersed, we shall now get rid of these damned militia, who torment us so much, and be at ease. Come landlord," said they, "give us a drink of new milk." They got the milk, lighted their pipes, and went their way.

Then Kennedy brought me some new milk and spirits, which he and I drank, and he congratulated me on my escape hitherto, and he hoped I should now get safely over the rest of my road. He thought me a most fortunate man. Katty, who wished more for gossip than to get home, annoyed Kennedy so much, that he threatened to put her into a sack and throw her into the Boyne, adding, "you old fool, you may travel all over the world safely, and no one will

hurt you; but you must not be allowed to en- 1798.
danger this man's life by your prate. You must leave him, and stop here till an opportunity occurs to send you hence, and in the mean time keep your red rag quiet, or else you shall have a swim in the sack; but if you behave yourself, I'll send you on some of the corn cars to Dublin on Monday." Poor Katty was alarmed at the determination with which Kennedy said this, and having witnessed acts as well as threats, and seen them follow each other more frequently than otherwise, she was very submissive, and promised to do as she was bid; so I got rid of Katty, to my great satisfaction.

I was now conducted by Kennedy over the Boyne water, and put on a path which he said led to a house where I would be kindly treated: he then left me with many good wishes. I travelled on for some time, and came suddenly on a large farm-house, where I received a willing reception, and I may say, very hearty welcome. Two women, one young and good looking, the other advanced in years, whose benevolent heart was exhibited in her countenance, each seemed to vie with the other in attention. They brought me hot water to bathe my feet, and clean stock-

1798. ings and linen, and took my own and washed them. They then gave me oat-cakes and butter-milk, which after I had eaten, they shewed me a comfortable bed, where I slept for several hours.

When I awoke, I found my shirt and stockings beside me clean and well aired, and my shoes well cleaned. They asked me many questions about my misfortunes, and the actions I had been in. I was not a little gratified at the great commiseration and solicitude which they exhibited respecting General Holt, who, they said, had been killed. That many of the men they had seen had been much grieved, and felt very sorry for him, as he was a great loss to the cause. He knew how to conduct them, and they had great confidence in his bravery and skill; but the poor General was shot in crossing Longford bog. "A vourneen," added my pretty and kind-hearted young friend, "he was a sore loss," and the tears started to her beautiful blue eyes.

"Do not fret, my darling," said I, "Holt is not dead, he is alive and well."

She clapped her hands with joy, and exclaimed, "thanks be to God! Mother, General

Holt is not dead, but alive and safe." And she 1798.
was so overjoyed, that she knelt down to pray for my success.

I cannot tell what I felt at this moment. I was affected in a manner as new as it was unexpected by me. I could keep the secret no longer. "My good people," said I, "I AM HOLT."

I showed her the wound on my head, and that on my left arm; she again blessed God for my escape, and appeared astonished and delighted that I had taken refuge in her house, and that she had an opportunity of administering to my necessities. She had not long quitted the room, before twenty-four poor unfortunates came into the house, who were all desired to sit down, and oaten cakes were placed before them, and the young woman was busily employed in baking more cakes on the griddle; she afterwards told me they had been so employed for some days past.

These poor fellows related their misfortunes, and the circumstances of the late action. They seemed particularly grieved at the loss of their leader.

"And agrah!" said the old woman, "who was he?"

1798. "General Holt," was the answer.

"Avourneen, he is not dead but sleeping."

"I saw him fall," said one of the men, "from his horse in leaping a drain in Longford bog, and bleeding from a wound in his head."

"I tell you, avourneen, he is sleeping in the next room."

They were astonished and delighted when she brought them into the room, and there they saw me sleeping sure enough. They were anxious for me to rise and go with them; if I was not able to travel they would carry me. The bustle awoke me, and I arose and thanked them for their offer, but I thought it more prudent to proceed alone. They left me, and carried the first news of my safety to the county of Wicklow. These men were the first I saw afterwards, on my arrival at Glenmalure.

I now began to think of how I could pass safely through Dublin. I was well known, and it was next to impossible but some one or other would recognize me. I had, however, escaped so often, that I trusted in Providence I should pass through safely. I rose early the next morning and inquired the nearest road to Dublin; an old man pointed it out to me. I then took

leave of my kind friends, proceeded to the road, 1798.
and I soon arrived at a public house. It was about six in the morning, and the landlord was at the door. I asked for spirits, but he said he had none, but he had very good ale, and would mull a quart for me. I threw him the signal, which he affected to disregard, but he understood me, for he said, "I am not a united man, nor do I belong to any party, but wish all well." He said, "go into the barn, where there is some new hay that you can lie down upon, and I will follow you with the drink, which he soon after did. I requested him, if any cars were passing towards Dublin that he would let me know. He brought me a second pot of ale, and before it was drunk he told me that there were three loaded cars coming up. I went to the door and threw a signal to the drivers, who instantly answered me. I then offered the landlord a shilling for the ale, but he refused to take payment, and wished me safe.

These cars were from Castle Pollard,* laden with eggs, the driver's name was Kennedy. We settled that I was to appear as the owner of the

* In the county of West Meath, distant about seventy-five Irish miles from Dublin.

1798. cars, and we proceeded quietly along the road unmolested. I had heard that the military, as well as the police, were directed to have a look out for me and my fellow-sufferers; it therefore required the utmost circumspection on my part to avoid being known. On the road we frequently met with soldiers, and passed them at the doors of public houses drinking. On which occasions I showed much anxiety respecting the cars and their lading, doing something for their security and bustling about; once we stopped to drink and were in conversation with the soldiers, asking them questions about the rebels, and wishing them every success; in all the men I met that day not a single man appeared to know me except one, who smiled a recognition.

We arrived safely at Park-end Street, where the Kennedys and I went into a house to drink a parting glass of punch, after which we separated, they wishing me good luck and safe through Dublin. I directed my way over old Bow Bridge, by Old Kilmainham, through James Street, Thomas Street, and Francis Street, and turned at the Cross Poddle, by New Street, to

Harold's Cross.* Here a woman, named Susy Needham, who was reared at Delgany, in the county of Wicklow, met and knew me, and instantly turned off very sharply. I understood her. She went to the barracks to give information to Mr. Beresford, and in a few minutes I heard the rattle of the feet of cavalry on the pavement. I instantly scaled the west wall of the road, and on the other side secreted myself close under it. They halted near the spot, and I began to think that I had been watched, and was discovered. I prepared for the worst, but was gratified to hear them ask a passenger they met, and stopped, if he had seen me, describing my person. He said he had met a man but did not observe him much, he appeared in a hurry, and was gone towards Cromlin. The cavalry determined to proceed in that direction, and off they went in double-quick time. 1798.

In a few minutes I arose and mounted my protector, the wall. I could see no one, so I crossed to the opposite side of the road, and

* To the reader unacquainted with Dublin, Holt's line of march may be described by an angular intersection of the south-west quarter of that city by the leading streets.

1798. took to the fields up to Hollypark, and thence to the enchanted house on Montpelier Hill.* On my way I passed the house where my dear wife and children were, but had I stopped, it would probably have been to see them for the last time. I hoped, however, that as the Almighty had guided me through so many difficulties and dangers, I should be preserved to die a happy death. I entered the enchanted house on the top of this hill, about which so many stories are told, with the most pious feelings of gratitude. I had now arrived in a country familiar to me; I had been shielded in battle, saved in defeat, and had passed through a host of enemies. I had been seen by one who knew me well, and like the keen sportsman, she gave the view halloo, the poor victim was put to his shifts, he doubled on the hounds, and threw them off the scent, a chance fox came across them, and they

* "On the crown of this hill is a lodge, falling to ruin, not having been inhabited for thirty years; it is called the haunted house, and the hill, Bevan's Hill. Local tradition states that in this house, a man, named Bevan, murdered his wife; and the peasanty will seriously tell you, that to the interrogatory 'who killed his wife?' an echo from this ruin will answer 'Bevan.'" — *Angling Excursions of Gregory Greendrake, in Ireland*, 1824.

ran him to Cromlin, the old fox gave them the go-by, and here he was earthed for the night, out of their view, and safe from their keen and hot pursuit. 1798.

My first act was with a full soul overwhelmed by a sense of the wonderful, and almost miraculous escapes I had experienced, to acknowledge the mercies of the Almighty. It appeared to me as if I had gone through a heavy shower of bullets, and but *one* had touched me; for I had passed through a thick population, among whom I was well known, and yet though I had been recognized, it was by a woman, incapable of seizing me at the moment, but willing and ready to give information, which, however, I was enabled to counteract; and here I was in safety. I felt convinced that God had heard my prayers, and that as I trusted in his superintending providence, it had been extended to me in a palpable and extraordinary manner. This to my mind appeared to be certain and unquestionable.

Impressed with these feelings, and overcome with fatigue, I lay down in the arched room of the remarkable building, on Montpelier Hill. I felt so confident of the protection of the Almighty, that the name of enchantment, and the

1798. idle stories which were told of the place, had but a slight hold of my mind; I thought there could be nothing worse there than myself, and having returned thanks, and prayed for a continuance of God's blessing and protection, I composed myself, and soon fell into as profound a sleep as if I had been, as formerly, reposing in my own comfortable bed, in quiet times, with my happy family about me.

I arose early next morning; it was a splendid opening of day, I was on the point, the very top of the hill; before me lay the country forming a regular slope to the shore, with the sea in the distance, studded with hills. Howth, and Killiny, Lambay, and the distant country of Fingal, were just tipped by the golden rays of the rising sun, with the rich and beautiful foreground full of houses and handsome residences. It was a glorious sight, and never shall I forget that sun-rise. The thought of the peaceful-looking scene which lay before me, being the theatre of savage and vindictive feelings, where man was using every means to destroy his fellows, and for what? a phantom, a shadow, what was called liberty; but which feverish dream, if successful, was not likely to lead to substantial freedom.

True freedom consists in peace and security. 1798.
Men are by nature inclined to vice, and unrestrained liberty is misery. I was musing on the magnificent landscape which lay before me, and was brought into such a moralizing habit of mind, that I had almost forgotten my still perilous situation—I was far from being out of danger.

I now proceeded to the small village of Piperstown, where I found a piper who was playing *Erin go Bragh*,* and a little girl, whom I asked if she knew the Holts of Bohernabreena, in the Chapel House; she answered me that she did, and I sent a note by her to my brother, to request him to send me a loaf of bread, some cheese, and a pint of whiskey. On receiving the note, he said to his wife, "Joseph is not dead, here is his handwriting." He sent me what I wanted, and a note desiring me to meet him in a field near Carysfield. To which place I repaired, and met him in company with Richard Johnson, a farmer who lived near Tipper. We sat together for some time and talked of my adventures. Johnson proposed to go to Mr. Beresford to

* To this melody I believe the Poet Campbell wrote his beautiful song of the Exile of Erin,—at least Campbell's words are popularly sung to the air.

1798. obtain my pardon, but I was afraid of him, and I had reason, as will appear hereafter. He took a cow from my distressed wife and never paid her for it. I did not, however, know this circumstance at the time. I did not let out my intentions as to further proceedings; and feeling that I could not trust Johnson, I led him from the truth. This man was very ungrateful, seven of his horses were taken by my men to Whelp Rock, which I caused to be returned to him; I felt that his proposed kindness was deceptive, especially as a large sum was offered for my apprehension.

I now had the satisfaction of seeing my afflicted and beloved wife, our meeting was sorrowful, the sight of her was a gratification to me, a great one, but it was a melancholy meeting: I was an outlaw, a price was set on my head, my adherents were discomfited and dispersed, I was a poor forlorn wretched fugitive, with the blood-hounds stirred up by the hopes of blood-money in full cry after me. I indeed embraced her who was most dear to me on earth, perhaps for the last time. I told her I would surrender if his Majesty's pardon was proclaimed, and I did all I could to make her mind easy. I despaired of

doing more than negociating terms, and I had nothing left for it but to make the best fight I could, or die an ignominious death by surrendering at discretion. My excellent wife saw the truth of my observations, and bitterly as my situation grieved her, had too much good sense and fortitude to desire me to act otherwise. She bade me not despair of God's merciful protection, and called to my recollection the many hair breadth escapes I had already experienced. We separated with sorrow, but not altogether in despair. 1798.

I now left Glenasmoel and crossed Butter Mountain to Ballyfolen, Scurlock's Leap, and stopped in Adown. I went to the house of a widow Kirwan, who refused me refreshment, declaring she was destitute of any thing save some cabbage leaves which were in the pot, and that she had nothing else in the house. I drew my sword, and with it examined the contents of the pot; but though I could not convict her of the falsehood she told me, I felt satisfied that it was one. A few days after I had her house searched, and found four sacks of oatmeal, two flitches of bacon, and other things. She was ungrateful to me, for I had been kind to her,

1798. and got a fine of ten pounds removed which had been inflicted on her for depredations on the lands of Peter Latouche, Esq. of Luggelaw.

I now proceeded to Ballydaniel, to the house of Simon Kearney, who received me with warm greetings, and supplied me with every necessary. He intreated me to remain with him, but I declined, bade him farewell, and proceeded by Ballylow to Whelp Rock, where I was hailed with acclamations of joy.

The people were anxious for me to remain with them, but I was anxious to visit the sick and wounded in Glenmalure, and passed over the three Lough Mountain, on the top of which I met a young woman gathering froughans, a small black fruit which grows in elevated places, and who gave me some. I had saved her life in Longwood, by rescuing her from the military, when I received two slight wounds. One of her brothers was killed at Clonard, and another was wounded at Castle Carberry. I was glad to see her, and her company relieved the tiresome tediousness of this lone and elevated waste. The mountains here are the highest in this county and nearly uninhabited, without roads or any means of approach for horses or carriages;

it requires good lungs to breathe the pure air, 1798.
and sound limbs to encounter the fatigue of crossing them.

The Whelp Rock is situated between Ballylow and Lavarna, in the centre of this dreary and inhospitable district, and was fixed on by me as a position almost unapproachable to the military; here I considered myself safe in my own little territory, and by judicious arrangements and prudent precautions, was enabled to hold out against the united efforts of the King's army and the yeomanry of the country for so long a period.

This young woman went with me to Glenmalure: which valley is about two miles and a half long, and three quarters of a mile wide, a branch of the river Ovoca runs through it. On one side the mountains which bound it are nearly perpendicular, and in many places absolutely hang over it, apparently threatening to crush the spectator by the fall of the enormous masses of rocks, of which they are composed. It is a beautiful and interesting place. The new road from Donard and the county of Carlow to Arklow now passes through it.

I stopped at Pierce Harney's house, and slept

1798. there; the next morning, about 300 men came to Harney's house, who were part of the poor wretches that escaped from the expedition to the Boyne, a scheme of father Kearns', ill conceived and worse executed, but so it is and always will be when too many heads are employed to direct a multitude; fools and cowards predominate, and as they are the decided majority of mankind, therefore, in times of trouble, when promptitude and vigour are required, delay and consequent loss of opportunity is inevitable, —plans are always published and counteracted, and eventually the majority, nine times in ten, decide wrong. We left a strong country where we could have made a good resistance and obtained terms, and moved into an open one apparently for the express purpose of delivering ourselves into our enemies' power. We were defeated, multitudes destroyed, taken and gibbeted; the folly of our acts brought on its due punishment.

To have proposed prudent measures, previous to our advance to the Boyne; it would have produced certain death to any one. Father Kearns, who had most influence over the Wexford fugitives, having suggested that measure, and al-

though I saw the folly, and tried to prevent it, 1798.
the holy father was, from his sanctity of character, too much for me, and I was outvoted. The priest could not err, and many thousand poor devils fell victims to their confidence in the sanctified sagacity of their spiritual guides. They might know something of their religious economy, but in military affairs they were worse than fools. Had I but the command of the rebel army before they left Whelp Rock for the Boyne, I would have made a dart at Newtown Mount Kennedy, and do not doubt I should have succeeded in capturing the guns and ammunition there: I would then have sent a proposal to the government for a submission on the best terms which could be obtained. I saw the game was up, but we were still in such force, and in so strong a position, that we might probably have obtained terms for our lives at all events, if not a pardon. The government would have been glad to put an end to the contest, and were mercifully inclined. I fought for no other object than to save the lives of my followers and my own.

The poor creatures whom I found here, were principally composed of those who had fled to

1798. the mountains to save themselves, after their houses had been burned, and they were overjoyed to see me; vowed to follow my directions, and implicitly to obey my instructions and commands to the last moment of their lives. I told them I was willing to become a full private, if they would promise not to reduce me lower. This produced laughter, and they all declared that I should be their general, uncontrolled by any other authority, for they had been successful under me; but when others took the command, nothing but misfortunes attended them. I told them our affairs were getting worse every day, and that I would do the best I could for them.

I issued orders to them to be formed into companies, and appointed the steadiest and smartest men to be officers; desired them to collect and be provident of their gunpowder; pointed out to them that we might be supplied with lead enough from Glenameth House; and ordered them to recruit with expedition, promising that every man who raised one hundred men should be appointed a captain; thus in a short time I found out the best men and the most prudent economists.

My old and trusty friend the "Moving Maga- 1798.
zine" again appeared, and was furnished with a basket of gingerbread, fruit, &c., with her two satchels, or pockets, fore and aft, to convey ball cartridge, which she readily procured from the disaffected soldiers at the different military stations. She also was a spy on the movements of the army, and a most useful ally I found her. The slightest motion was instantly communicated by her means to my outposts, and they speedily conveyed the intelligence of it to head quarters, so we were tolerably safe against surprise.

I next examined the most suitable position, and the best calculated for defence and retreat, for our camp having purchased experience by this time, I became cautious and provident. I examined the state of the road at each end of the Glen, and finding a kind of pavement at the west, I made my men roll great stones down the sides into the river, and thus closed the end effectually, by making a gulf across the road, which in twenty-four hours was thirty feet deep, so that neither man nor horse could penetrate on that side. I then went to the east and threw down the bridge, I thus secured my-

1798. self from surprise, and obstructed the sudden approach of an enemy. My numbers increased greatly, every day or night thirty or forty returned from the Boyne. Twenty-eight deserters from the Antrim militia joined me from Arklow, with soldiers from various other regiments; some from the Longford; in short, I had under me deserters from thirteen different regiments, most, if not all, of whom came well prepared, some brought with them sixty rounds of ball cartridge.*

I now felt myself grown somewhat formid-

* Extracts from private letters, dated Dublin, August 28. —"The county of Meath I am sorry to inform you, is in a very disturbed state, as well as also several of the surrounding counties. Holt is endeavouring to collect the scattered remains of his forces in the county of Wicklow, and, I am informed, has again appeared in considerable force. He yesterday took a serjeant of the Leitrim Militia, who was crossing the mountains, prisoner, but after some interrogatories, liberated him." "A person of the name of Holt, has, I am informed, the command of a rebel force on the mountains of Wicklow. Disaffected soldiers, deserters, and desperate rebels, have found a resting-place at his standard."—*Courier Newspaper, 4th September,* 1798.

Extract from a private letter, dated Dublin, 31st August, printed in the Courier of 5th September, 1798.—"I must be excused from mentioning any thing which I have heard respecting the Militia."

able, and began to think of the offensive, I called 1798.
my men together and addressed them:—

"My boys we will go—we are now in a state capable of exertion, and I purpose shewing our enemies we are not to be despised, by letting them feel our power; they will respect us the more, and if we are driven to extremities we shall be able to make better terms; be attentive to orders, let no disputes arise among you, no disobedience of orders, your individual safety depends on unity of action, if every man thinks to act according to his own notion of what is best, we shall soon be cut to pieces, or put to death. By the law you have chosen me for your chief and general, you must obey my orders, or the punishment which awaits you is destruction; we are strong, but our enemies are stronger. It will therefore require great management and prudence to conduct our affairs, you have seen and felt the consequences of bad generalship, and want of discipline. Above all things, drink no spirits but what are given out by orders — recollect Edenderry, where five hundred brave fellows who disobeyed orders were bayonetted in a state of stupidity from drunkenness."

1798. This address was answered with a shout of applause, and all swore to be true and obedient. I then gave orders to march, and advanced into Imail, where we pitched our tents, and remained ten days. Three corps of cavalry came to attack us from Hacketstown; we soon dispersed them, taking a few prisoners, who, when examined, were found to be united Irishmen, wearing two faces, one for their country and the other for their king; I did not admire such double-faced fellows, but my people were partial to united men, and they were enrolled among us.

We then moved on to the Whelp Rock, where a party of the 89th regiment, and some regular cavalry, with the Blessington and Donard cavalry, came after us. I led them through Imail to the side of Lugnaquilla mountain, and stationed my men about the centre of the hill, behind a rock, with orders not to fire till the army was within pistol shot, and then to take care to aim well. They advanced, and we let fly a volley, which killed thirty-five men on the spot; and had Captain Hughes obeyed my orders, not a man of them would have escaped, for I sent him round the

hill to cut off their retreat, but he was not as expeditious as he ought to have been. They retreated with the loss of the thirty-five killed and three prisoners. These men submitted without firing, so I caused them to be liberated, and gave them their choice to return to their regiments or join me; they chose the former. I told them that they must go without their arms or ammunition, but they said if they did they would be shot. I told them I would give them a certificate that the rules of my camp were so, but they did not like returning, so they joined me, and I armed them with pikes. Two of them were killed in passing through Glenbride, and the other deserted, and I saw no more of him. 1798.

In staying at Whelp Rock, being out of gunpowder I found I could do nothing, so I went to Aughavanagh, and thence to Gold Mines, and halted on Croghane, near Arklow, to try and procure a supply of gunpowder. One day I had a fancy to reconnoitre, and ordered out twenty-four horse to attend me; we went to Kilmanor, where we saw a few cavalry at exercise; we bore down upon them quickly, in hopes of getting between them and the barracks. They

1798. soon perceived us and retreated into the barracks of Coolgreny, from whence they fired upon us.

In an engagement my habit was to dismount, and being armed with an excellent light fusee, I made good use of it. One M'Dermott from the Antrim militia, who was with me, received a ball, of which he died that night; I saw the man fire the shot, and brought him down with my fusee. They continued firing at us from the windows, but we broke in and set the house on fire. John Moon, from the Antrim militia, shot one man and knocked out the brains of another. I then retired to Croghane, much concerned for the loss of M'Dermott, who was a brave man, and a good soldier. This barrack was within two miles of Arklow.

I knew there would now be a sharp look out for me, so I removed and pitched my camp on the hill above Clone. Colonel Skerret's corps was placed at Killaduff, within a mile and a half of me, and General Craig, the same evening pitched his tent on the side of Aughrim Hill, and a third body, whose Commander's name I did not learn, occupied the side of the hill of Tinnakilly, all within two miles of me. I saw what they

were about, and had made up my mind what to 1798.
do. Some of my men, whom I allowed to make free with me, came to ask me what I intended to do, and how we should escape. I asked them how many legs the soldiers had, they answered *two*: "Well," says I, "has not God given you as many and equal ability to use them?" "Yes," said they, "but we are surrounded." "Obey orders," said I, "and by God's blessing we will give them the go by." They had had a few tastes of the consequences of rashness; and I did not fear a sudden attack.

It was about five o'clock P. M., I then directed my men to make one hundred and fifty heaps of furze and thorn bushes, and sent four steady men to go to four different farm houses, with orders that three hundred weight of potatoes should be boiled precisely at seven o'clock. I walked about, putting on a steady and determined face, and said we shall have sport tomorrow morning. I remained in this position till about seven o'clock, and on the approach of night, as soon as it was dark, I ordered all the heaps of furze and bushes to be set on fire, and made the men pass in rapid succession before them several times, and then retire behind and

1798. march off in silence, with orders that any man who spoke above a whisper should be instantly piked by the man next him. In this manner we marched unobserved to the houses where I had ordered the potatoes to be boiled, and the men having obtained refreshment, I marched on, giving directions to the pickets not to fire unless they came very near the enemy. They very soon encountered Colonel Skerrett's corps, and fired on each other; my men said they saw some of the enemy fall.

I continued my march, and passed safely between the two positions of the enemy to a village called (Ballyshal) Shealstown, about six miles distant. I made my men take possession of six houses in the village, and I secured the doors to prevent them getting out, not being able to keep them quiet, from their unruly and boisterous disposition, keeping thirty-six men of the most trusty and steady for pickets.

Next morning the army advanced upon the hill where they had seen the fires over night, and found the ashes, but the birds were flown, nor could they ascertain what had become of us, we marched so silently and quietly, for I did not apprise even my own men of my plan or inten-

tions, telling them, if they wished to be safe, to obey orders. At this period so large a sum was offered for my apprehension, that it behoved me to be cautious of putting myself in any man's power, and I had many with me I could not trust. 1798.

The enemy after a fruitless search gave up the pursuit, and returned to their camp, exclaiming, "Holt dealt with the devil." My pickets informed me that the enemy had retired. I then released my men from the houses where they had been confined, to keep them out of sight; formed them, and told them that we were not strong enough to fight the king's troops, but we were able to harass them with fatigue, and cut them off by detail.

The reward offered for my apprehension or head, was now increased to three hundred pounds. I received the newspaper containing the proclamation, on parade, on which I called the men about me and read it out as follows:—

Proclamation

"By Lieutenant General Craig, &c. &c. &c.—Whereas Joseph Holt has been notorious in promoting the present unprincipled Rebellion,

1798. and is now at the head of a party of rebels in the county of Wicklow: A reward is hereby offered of Three Hundred Pounds, to whoever shall deliver up the aforesaid Joseph Holt, to any of his Majesty's officers, or give intelligence by which he may be apprehended or secured.

By order of Lieutenant General CRAIG.

D. J. FREEMAN, Assist. Ad. Gen."*

I then addressed the people in these words:— "What an inconsiderate blockhead must this Craig be, to offer so small a reward for my head. He ought by this time to know its true value, and also what you all think of it and its price; not a man among you is so base as to betray your leader, and sell your best, your only friend. My boys, my head is worth a million, and if his Majesty knew the value of it he would have had me to command his troops, instead of that silly fellow. With God's assistance, before I have done with them, I will let them know the value of this same knob of mine! Gentlemen, if any of you bring me the brainless skull of this

* This proclamation appeared in the Dublin newspapers from the 20th September to the 13th November following.

blundering, bleating coxcomb, I will give you three thousand pounds, although it is not worth as many farthings." 1798.

My companions were very active, and I had instant accounts of all the movements of the army, as well as of the state of the country, and of affairs. General Dundas's proclamation of protection and pardon, to all offenders who should come in to him and deliver up their arms and leaders, and take the oath of allegiance, to be faithful to his Majesty in future, was brought to me, on which I immediately issued a like proclamation as follows:—

"By Joseph Holt, General of the National Army.—Whereas it has been represented to me, that many misguided persons are anxious to shew their fidelity to their country, and to return to their homes. Now, these are to notify to all such that shall come in to my head quarters, and deliver up their arms, and take an oath of fidelity to their country, and to be peaceable, not interfering in any respect with the unhappy conflict—on one side tyrannically to inflict death; on the other, to preserve life

1798. and liberty, shall receive protection from me, and be allowed peaceably to gather in the harvest, and attend to their affairs.

By the General's command,

ANTRIM JOHN."

It was now harvest time, and many of my enemies, who had fled to towns and barracks, and wanted to return home, availed themselves of this proclamation, and it made me very merry to see them coming in, in consequence; delivering up their fowling pieces, powder-flasks, and ammunition, trusting to my faithfully keeping my engagement. My men were short of tobacco; I, therefore, to keep them in good humour, ordered the Clerk of Protections to charge ten shillings for each, and appropriated the proceeds to the purchase of that most useful commodity. The form of the oath was as follows:—

"I, A. B. do swear that I will never sell, set, discover, or betray a United Irishman, or cause it to be done; and, further, I will to the utmost of my knowledge and power, make known to General Holt, whenever I shall see

any impending danger, of which I think said information may be of use, and that as speedily as in my power lies. 1798.

So help me God."

On this a written protection was given to the party, as follows :—

"By General, Joseph Holt, &c. &c.—These are to certify, that A. B. of ———, has protection to return to his home, and that he and his property is to be respected and saved harmless.

General Joseph Holt."

This was of the greatest service to me, it procured me arms, ammunition, spies, watchers, and informers, and our new friends finding themselves and families perfectly safe in their homes, they were inviolably faithful to their oaths, being all Protestants. Of course they did not tell their fellow loyalists the nature of their engagement, or the substance of their vow, but they kept it honestly to me, of which I had afterwards repeated evidence. Most of the protestant inhabitants of the following towns and neigh-

1798. bourhood, returned to their homes on these conditions, viz. Ballymanus, Ballycurragh, Shealstown, Knockalt, Whelp Rock, &c. &c.

I marched to Knockalt, a mountain village, on the King's River, and had my head quarters at Oliver Hoyle's house, a good and faithful man, ready at all times to render me service. Here I drilled my men, and used them to act in bodies, forming them into divisions, marching and counter-marching, dispersing and forming again, having sham battles, &c., until I had them very expert. I found that the musket and bayonet was not to be compared in effect to a pike. If the men were steady and well disciplined, a charge of pikes would be irresistible against the musket and bayonet; so much superior are they, that after a few months practice, I should have no fears of the result, if I were to meet the best regiment in the king's service, with an equal number of good men with pikes. My men never were well disciplined; discipline was out of the question where every man thought himself equal to his officer, who had not martial law to back his commands.

One morning, while we were engaged in a sham battle, the pickets announced the ap-

proach of about three hundred men of the army from Blessington, and that we were soon to have the reality of war. I addressed my men, "Boys, I like sport, we shall soon have some, but you must be steady, obey orders, and we shall give a good account of these gentlemen." I had no drum, therefore, I adopted as a call to arms, a quick discharge of my two pistols, which soon brought the men under arms. I had a plan of defence contrived on the side of Knockalt hill, where three thousand men might lie in ambush. I had three hundred and eighty well disciplined and armed resolute men, mostly deserters; these I placed in the said intrenchments under the command of Francois Joseph, a Frenchman, a deserter from the Hessian regiment which was in Imail.* I had also four 1798.

* "The glen of Imail adjoins Glenmalure, and lies between the stupendous mountain of Lugnaquilla, the highest in Wicklow (being about 3000 feet), and the town of Donard. This extensive vale, formerly the residence of the O'Tooles, who were denominated kings of Imail, must once have been both well planted and better cultivated than at present. It was conspicuous in the rebellion of 1798 from being the birth place of the famous Dwyer, usually denominated the Wicklow desperado. At the end of the glen is seen the precipitous declivity of Lugnaquilla, called the North Prison, which is a semicircular recess in the front of the mountain,

1798. hundred pikemen whom I placed in another part of my ambuscade, and then gave my orders to the officers.

I then remained a quiet spectator of the enemy's motions, waiting for their visit with all due patience and humility, and amusing myself by observing them with my glass. They halted on the bank of the King's river, and got hold of an old woman and began asking her questions. She had received her lessons from me.

"Have you seen that rebel rascal Holt?"

"Faith and troth, have I, do you see that place on the side of Knockalt hill, I saw him and his men in them two green fields this morning, and mighty busy he was, moving them backwards and forwards; he must have plagued the craturs, for they have been on the trot all the morning."

"Has he any deserters with him?"

"Faith, has he, two red coats to a grey one."

I was watching them all this time, they hesitated, and I went to my men and brandishing my sword, said:

composed of masses of dark rock, in the cavities and fissures of which are many eagles' nests."—*Wright's Guide to the County of Wicklow.*

"Have I any volunteers who will cross the river, and give those cowards a broadside." 1798.

The Leitrim light company instantly offered their services, I told them I should move to their support if I saw them pressed. They crossed the river in gallant style, advanced and gave the enemy a volley, which brought several of them to the ground. The cowards were so terrified that they did not return our fire, but sounded the trumpet for a retreat, and made off helter skelter. We pursued them more than four miles, when I ordered a retreat, and on our return we found the trophies of this affair were eighteen muskets, twenty-four cartridge boxes, thirteen bayonets, and ten dead men, the wounded I could not ascertain, nor the name of their gallant leader, whose conduct was deserving of much reprobation. Had he made the resistance he ought to have done, I must have retired in fifteen minutes from want of ammunition. We stopped on our return at Black Ditches, where I treated the men with some whiskey, which recruited our strength, and elevated our victorious spirits.

At my entrenchments at Knockalt, I had the gratification of meeting my darling "moving

1798. magazine," loaded to the water's edge; she had no less than three hundred ball cartridges, as well made as it was possible for the king's servants to construct them, and moreover a very accurate account of all the military stations she had visited. I found she had been unusually diligent, and had made the most of her pretty face and other accomplishments, which must have been very insinuating. Susy with all her debility of appearance, was but a modern antique, and some points about her were good as need to be. I considered her my chiefest treasure, and ordered her to be supplied with the best my camp could afford.

I knew there would be a formidable party to attack me the next morning, and therefore gave orders for all to be on the alert and ready to move at a moment's notice. My enemies finding me a subtle subject, and one not to be trifled with, would, I knew, if they were wise and did their duty, use such means to trap me as were likely to be effective. They had as many setters about me as Buck Whaley when he got the Duke of Y——, Miss ———, into his keeping.* One

* I am not able to illustrate the scandalous anecdote here alluded to by Holt. Those curious in the chronicles of slander

day a smart-looking tall girl met me with a basket on her arm, and came up to me saying: 1798.

"General, I have brought you some very fine apples from Rathfarnham."

may, no doubt, readily have their curiosity gratified by referring to the pages of the Court Magazine, or the Town and Country Magazine, if such worse than worthless publications have been preserved. Buck Whaley, however, was a notorious character, from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem and other achievements, famous in the annals of sporting. The Annual Register for 1788 has the following notice of the first of these affairs. "A young Irish gentleman, for a very considerable wager, set out on Monday the 22nd instant, [September] to walk to Constantinople and back again in one year. It is said that the young gentleman has £20,000 depending on the performance of his exploit." After winning his wager, which is commonly reported to have been, that he would walk to Jerusalem and play at ball against the walls of the Holy City within six months, Mr. Whaley, according to the same record of the events of the following year [1789], arrived in June at Dublin, from his journey to the Holy Land, "considerably within the limited time of twelve months. The wager laid on the performance of that expedition was £20,000." Whaley's extraordinary achievement, as it was then considered, gave rise, in Dublin, to a popular song, known by the name of its burden, "Round the world for sport"—a phrase which the author of Angling Excursions in Wicklow has, no doubt, correctly appropriated to the celebrated verbal abbreviator Judy of Roundwood, whom I have had the pleasure of seeing most admirably represented by Mr. John Russell in the description of Sir Walter Scott's interview with that MacAdamizer of the English tongue.

1798. "Have you?" said I.

"Yes," she answered, "and there will be a great number of the boys, with you, who are gathering gunpowder these three weeks, and sure they bid me come and tell you."

Mr. Whaley's sister, Isabella, married the first Lord Clare, and to Mr. Whaley belonged the seat more than once mentioned hereafter as Whaley's Abbey. It is situated on the side of the mountain west of the first meeting of the waters in the vale of Avoca, the name of which the muse of Moore has associated with ideas of peace and harmony—

"Sweet vale of Avoca, how calm could I rest," &c.

but alas for the reality of a poet's dream! In this district the most daring of Holt's exploits were performed; and although, notwithstanding the sarcasm of Moore's friend Byron about "Little's leadless pistol," I am far from impeaching either the courage or prowess of that gentleman; yet I very much doubt if the poet would have rejoiced in his calm and sweet vale of Avoca, had he visited it in 1798, when Holt, as subsequently appears in his memoirs, rode a blood mare which had belonged to Mr. Whaley, and upon which animal Holt crossed two rapid rivers. Mr. Whaley is said to have been the possessor of some of the best bred-horses in Ireland. His town residence was in St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, from the drawing-room window of which, for a considerable wager, he is commonly believed to have leaped, on a favourite little Arabian horse, over a mail coach. This *fete* was accomplished by taking out the window-frame, and having a quantity of straw laid on the pavement below to receive the gallant horse and its determined rider. I do not vouch for

I looked her earnestly in the face, and then 1798.
asked their names. She answered,

"Faith, sir, I do not know: you know them yourself."

I then asked her several questions, and was perfectly satisfied she was a spy sent to entrap me. I knew my friends would not employ a person who was ignorant of our tokens. I ordered her to be tried, and after a fair investigation she was found guilty. I directed her basket to be kept, and that she should receive a dozen lashes with a bunch of nettles, and then be ducked in the river and turned adrift, which was done accordingly. My men wanted to cut off her ears, but I would not allow this; and I heard no more of her. She carried back little information of use to her employers. Although I was an admirer of the fair, even the bait of a pretty girl would not do.

the accuracy of this sporting anecdote; I merely "tell the tale as told to me."

To redeem this from the character of a very desultory note, it behoves me to state, that Mr. Wright, in his Wicklow Guide Book, says, that "the house (Whaley Abbey) was erected upon the site of an ancient Abbey, built by a brother of St. Kevin. Archdale," adds Mr. Wright, "thinks this was St. Dagan, and that it was originally called the Abbey of Ballykine."

1798. A boy came to Whelp Rock on the same scheme; I observed him walking through the camp, and asked him what he wanted. He answered that he was looking for his father, whose name was James Connor of Hacketstown. I ordered an inquiry; but such a man was not with us. At length he was recognized to be the son of a basket-woman, named Murphy. I ordered Lieutenant Pluck to tie him up to the three-legged horse and give him a dozen; on receiving three lashes he confessed he had been sent by Captain M'Donnell to observe our situation, and bring him an account, who gave him three guineas, which he handed over to his mother, and a promise of a suit of clothes on bringing the information. I let him go; and at his return he was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death, which was carried into effect in twelve hours after. What for? He deserved death at my hands, but not at those of his employers.

Next morning we moved across the mountains to Ballybracka, near Adown.* My men asked for orders how they were to act to the inhabi-

* The valley of Adown extends from Sally Gap, which is about ten miles south-west of Dublin, to a spot called Scurlock's Leap, between three and four miles east of Blessington.

tants. My answer was, "free quarters." These people were all sworn united men, but they resorted to my camp to procure plunder, steal horses, &c., and then to cover their nefarious thieving, they gave information of our state to the enemy, which made me determined to punish them. My head-quarters were at the house of Edward White, who had four sons, all united men. I now recollected the inhumanity of the widow Kirwan of Adown, and gave orders that every thing we required should be taken from her house. With my guard I went to White's house, whose wife appeared very civil, but I suspected it was only from the teeth outwards. She said, 1798.

"General, I am sorry you did not visit us last week, as I have not even a bit of butter now in the house?"

"Madam," said I, "we cannot expect impossibilities, you cannot give us what you do not possess."

A young woman, who was with us, went to examine, and found a fine cool of butter,* which

* A shallow tub, holding from twenty to thirty pounds of butter; put by as a store or for sale. From Cuil, a corner or closet.

1798. Mrs. White could not claim, as she denied the possession of any, and she knew it was of no use to attempt to regain it.

"General, I have not a drop of spirits."

"You have money, Madam," said I, "and can send for some, and I would recommend you to do so at once."

"I am afraid to send for it," said she.

"I am willing to oblige you," said I, "in any thing that it is in my power to do for you; and to spare you the trouble, hand me out the money, and I will find you the messenger."

She replied, "Perhaps you will be gone before the spirits are brought."

"Madam," said I, sternly, "I am fully aware of the obligations I owe to Ballybracka and its inhabitants; they have acted to me most treacherously, and I may as well civilly tell you, that I do not intend leaving this place till I see it in flames."

"Musha, then!" she replied, "the General is angry;" and out she pulled half-a-guinea. I added, another half-guinea, and ordered one of my men named Dogherty, to bring as much whiskey as this would pay for, with which he soon returned, and we spent the evening plea-

santly enough. Next morning I ordered Captain Hollogan and his company to go to the hill over White's house, where he would find a flock of good sheep, of which he was to bring as many as were marked with E. W. They returned with eighty-six, which were instantly killed. Mrs. White came to me, crying, saying, she was ruined, for that one hundred of her sheep were forcibly taken and killed. 1798.

"Oh!" said I, "is that all; yesterday you had no provisions to offer a hungry man, not even butter, nor any thing whatever. My boys must eat, you know, and as you gave them no food, they have been obliged to provide for themselves. When your sons, Mrs. White, came to plunder my camp, and steal my horses and cattle, you did not complain of their being forcibly taken away; and they, too, were receiving rewards for giving information, like perjured villains, as they are. You did not murmur then. These sheep are my people's property; most of them were stolen from us, or are the produce of the horses and other cattle you and your sons, and such like wretches, stole from us and sold. You thought a day of retribution would not come, but you see you are mistaken. If I spare

1798 your lives think yourselves superabundantly complimented.—Madam, God speed you!"

Mrs. Kirwan soon after came to complain that my men had plundered her of four sides of bacon, four sacks of meal, shoes, shirts, and other articles, adding, "Sir, I hope you will have them restored."

I answered, "Madam, one good turn deserves another. You no doubt recollect your offering me some green cabbage leaves when I came to your house half famished and fatigued. On my return from the disasters of the Boyne, you refused me a mouthful of food, or a drink of milk, denying that you had any in your house, or in your power. It now appears that you had four sides of bacon, and as many sacks of meal, and abundance of provisions. Inhuman woman! disgrace to your sex! vanish from my presence: let my eyes look on such a monster no longer, or this tree shall be your gallows, if I catch the wind of another word from your deceitful lips."

She was off like a shot, and I certainly felt gratified at having an opportunity of paying her in her own coin, for the inhumanity of her conduct to me, and also at having it in my power to

punish the sons of deception that inhabited this part of the country, who outwardly played the parts of puritans, but inwardly were devils. They played cat and pan* with both parties, and were faithful to neither. 1798.

The news of our being at this place soon spread to Russborough,† where there was a large party of military; it, therefore, became necessary for us to think of moving. Before I went I wrote the following note to the commander of the troops there:—

"*To the Officer commanding at Russborough.*

"SIR,

"It is with particular indignation that I have

* To turn "cat-in-pan," according to Nares, is "a proverbial expression implying perfidy, but of which it is not easy to trace the origin." Thus, in the well-known song of the Vicar of Bray,—

"When George in pudding time came o'er,
And moderate men look'd big, sir,
I turn'd a *cat-in-pan* once more,
And so became a Whig, sir."

Playing cat-in-pan is a culinary phrase, which I have heard in Ireland applied to the most dexterous method of tossing pan-cakes.

† Two miles from Blessington, and the same distance from Ballymore Eustace. The seat of the Earls of Miltown.

1798. received information of a band of robbers who are plundering in the neighbourhood of Ballystocking, under pretence of belonging to my army. I disclaim them; they are robbers, and I request you will send a party after them, and bring them to justice. I would do it, but am leaving this part of the country.—Your obedient servant,

"General Joseph Holt."

On receiving my letter, the commanding officer sent a party to Ballystocking, attacked these robbers, shot eleven of them, and took eight prisoners; among them Garret Eustace, a celebrated piper, on whose person were found ninety-seven guineas in gold, and three in bank notes. I was thus cleared of the imputation these fellows' acts had thrown upon me.*

* The following account of Holt's conduct in bringing a gang of robbers to justice at this period, appears in the Courier newspaper of 16th August, 1798:—

"The rebel chief, Holt, sent, a few days ago, a letter to Lieutenant Hugo, of the Wicklow militia, informing him that he had just apprehended six robbers who, from their acts, were justly entitled to the appellation of *rebels;* that he intended delivering them up to Lieutenant Hugo, if the

I now received information that the army were advancing on all sides to endeavour to surround me. I, therefore, moved to Imail, where I remained three days. The inhabitants were all united men. I sent Francois Joseph, the Frenchman, to call on them to fulfil their vow, and render us assistance. He went to the house of one James Byrne, and asked him where his sons were. The old man answered, "What 1798.

escort which he sent with them were not molested. His proposition was agreed to."

This does not exactly accord with the statement in the text, but, taken together, they may be received in evidence that Sir Richard Musgrave was mistaken in describing Holt [see note p. 34,] as "a low fellow, without any kind of principle, and a notorious robber." Slight variations in dates, and even broad differences in the way of seeing and relating occurrences, are, perhaps, (startling as the assertion may appear to be) the best evidences of genuine contemporary narrative. So very deceptive is the memory, and so deceptive are the organs of sight, sound, and hearing, to put out of the question the mental colouring which every occurrence and object receives from the light under which it happens to be viewed, that I almost venture to assert, no two persons, with equal advantages as spectators, would relate the same transaction in the same manner, if each were to speak or write exactly from his own feelings without being influenced by or copying more or less from the other. And this latitude may be allowed to extend to figures, where dates are written from recollection, or numbers from report.

1798. is that to you?" On which Joseph drew a pistol and shot him dead on the spot. I had him instantly arrested, and brought to trial.

The Court were sworn, and the prosecutor, one of the men who was present with Joseph at the time, appeared in due form, and objected against the prisoner that he inflicted death on the deceased without cause, and was guilty of murder.

I examined the witnesses myself.

"Were you present when Joseph approached the door of the deceased?"

"I was."

"What passed between the prisoner and the deceased?"

"The prisoner asked deceased 'where his sons were?' and the deceased answered, 'What is that to you.'"

"Did any other conversation pass between the prisoner and the deceased?"

"No."

"Were you with the prisoner when he went first to the house of the deceased, and did you continue with him until the prisoner fired the pistol?"

"I was." 1798.

Another witness now came forward, who, being sworn, stated that he saw the prisoner go up to Byrne's door, and heard him ask for the four men, sons of the deceased; that some other conversation passed, which witness did not hear the particulars of, when prisoner drew a pistol, and shot the deceased through the breast, who fell dead on the spot. On cross-examination, the witness stated that he believed the rash act of the prisoner arose from the sons of the deceased not joining the camp, and his dogged conduct to the prisoner. The case for the prosecution closed.

The evidence in defence was as follows:—A witness came forward, and being sworn, said, that he went with the prisoner from the camp to Byrne's house, and on their way the prisoner told him he was going by command of the General to order out the united men of that place to join the army, and having called on the deceased for his four sons, and directed them to attend, as they were bound by their oaths, was answered by him, "That he would rather see them all shot at his door, than that they

1798. should join the camp." That the prisoner then asked him, "Are you not a united man, duly sworn?"

He answered, "I am."

"Were you forced to be sworn?"

"No."

"Were your sons sworn?"

"Yes."

"Were they compelled by force to be sworn?"

"No."

"And would you prefer being perjured, and to have your sons shot at your door, to joining us, and keeping your oath; and will you not assist us?"

The witness stated that more conversation took place, but he did not recollect its import, on which the prisoner drew a pistol and shot him, saying, "It was too easy a death for people of his disposition."

Three more evidences deposed to the same facts. The jury then acquitted the prisoner.

Being apprehensive of the vengeance of the friends of the deceased, I removed to Glenmalure, where I had my head-quarters at Pierce Harney's house, and had picquets at every point of approach. I heard that powder had been

collected for me at Cronebane,* and I made my arrangements with Colonel Matthew Doyle about going for it, and ordered out 300 of my best men for that purpose. We proceeded at dusk, and on passing down by a wood called the Flanker, I ordered the Antrim, Leitrim, and King's County companies to march near me, and observe a profound silence, keeping the advance about fifty yards before us. The road passed through a bog, and at the end of the bog there was a cross-road. Some time previous the yeomen had burned several houses at the end of this cross-road, and in the ruins of these a party of yeomanry from Rathdrum had concealed themselves in ambush. When we got within pistol shot of them, they gave us a volley, but not a man of us fell, though several were slightly wounded, and our clothes touched with their balls. I had a slight wound on the sole of my foot. I called out loudly, "Surround the bridge of Greenane, and we shall have them all!" We gave them a salute in return, on 1798.

* Cronebane, on account of its copper mines, was a point at which the disaffected could, with less risk than at any other in the county of Wicklow, collect gunpowder, and transfer it to the insurgents.

1798. which they immediately fled, absolutely rolling over each other in the greatest confusion. They were under the command of Lieutenant John Sutton. The next morning we found several of their accoutrements on the ground. They had a narrow escape, for we were more than a match for them, and they made good use of their scrapers. I knew the ground well, and if I had got hold of the bridge of Greenane before them, I should have cut off their retreat, which alarmed them so much, that they did not fire a single shot beyond the first volley.

We returned to Glenmalure, and called the roll, and found our loss trifling. One man named Corker came to have a ball extracted from his cheek; I felt it with my finger, and having lanced the cheek, with the assistance of a new-invented probe, a goose-quill, I extracted the ball, and having done so, dressed the wound, and the man was well in a few days. I told him when he had a few more hits of this sort he would make a good soldier. A woman of the name of Ann Byrne, had a ball passed through the thick part of her arm. I examined and dressed it, and in fifteen days she was well. My own wound never prevented me from doing

my duty, and the other wounds of the men were too slight to mention. 1798.

Mrs. Holt, who was with me at this time, said, she was sure we had been sold, and so I found it to be. A man in the Antrim company, named Peter Kavanagh, but known by the name of "good pay," had a girl with him, to whom he disclosed the object we had in view, and she immediately scampered off to Rathdrum with the information. I had not, on this occasion, kept my intention to myself, and had nearly paid dearly for even letting my superior officers into the secret. The account of this skirmish was transmitted to all the stations of the army, and expresses were flying about in great activity.

I received information that Mr. Allen, the clothier, was about making his house at Greenane, a barrack, in order to intercept reinforcements coming to me. I, therefore, called a council of war, and it was determined to burn it. I kept my intention secret, lest I should be betrayed again. I fired my signal, and marched to Greenane. One of my pickets observed a man named Whelan, running before us, who was known to be an enemy. John

1798. M'Evoy, and Antrim John, whom I had promoted to be field officers, seeing this man running, the former fired at him, and hit him in the shoulder, but he did not fall; M'Evoy fired again and shot him through the heart. We then marched on to Allen's house. I was on my horse while the men proceeded to set fire to the house, and heard a female voice shrieking in great distress. I leaped over a quickset hedge into the garden, and soon discovered a man struggling with a very pretty girl, who turned out to be the daughter of Mr. Allen. She cried to me for relief; the fellow persisted in his rudeness, on which I clove him down from the shoulder to the ribs with my broad sword, and relieved the poor girl from her melancholy situation.

I found her sister, mother, and aunt in the garden, on which I called a guard, and sent them off to a village near Rathdrum, where I knew the army would protect them. They were very grateful to me for my conduct to them.

The house was now in flames, and some of my men were missing; I enquired for them, and found they were endeavouring to force in an iron safe. I commanded them to come out, but

they refused until they had forced open the safe, 1798.
which after a time they accomplished, and found a few papers, about which these fools were going to cut one another's throats; but I interfered and took possession of the disputed spoil, telling them they should be examined on our return to the camp, and duly accounted for, which satisfied them.

When we arrived at the Glen, I caused the best clerks I had to examine the box, which was found to contain a few bills for small sums of money, with parchment leaves or deeds, of no value to the men.*

This Mr. Allen was reported to have been an United Irishman early in the business, and then changing to the other side, he was suspected by both parties. On my return from New South Wales, he called on me, and asked me to make an affi-

* The following note occurs in Holt's original MS.:— "My good reader, the reason I give you so particular an account of this is, because all the papers were packed up in a small iron box, and when the men got it out of the cupboard, they would have murdered each other for it, but to prevent this, I told them I would tie it up in my pocket handkerchief and cause the man that carried it never to quit my sight, until we arrived at the house of a man of the name of Kelly in the Glen."

1798. davit that *he was not* an United Irishman. I stared at him with astonishment, and said, "Mr. Allen, do you wish me to swear to a circumstance I know nothing about? I would swear that I was told by twenty people that you were a member; you are much indebted to me for protecting your wife, and the females of your family, when your house was burned in 1798, but you have no right to suppose my affidavit is so easily to be procured."

The day after the burning of Mr. Allen's house, "my moving magazine" arrived with the seasonable supply of two hundred and fifty ball cartridges, and the next morning very early, the pickets brought intelligence of the approach of a large body of military towards Balliboy, and the pickets from the other side of the Glen, announced that another body were coming south, from Fananerrin, on that side, so we had them advancing over the mountain, upon us, from the north and south at the same time. We could not retreat at the westend of the Glen, there being no passage.

I walked out to reconnoitre, and found they could not approach at either end of the Glen, as the bridge was thrown down, and the gulf I

had formed at the other, stopped their advance that way. I took my glass to ascertain their number, but they were so numerous that I could not count them accurately. I called my men to arms, and when they fell in, I addressed them as nearly as I can recollect, in these words :— 1798.

"My dear fellows, our fate, this day, depends on God and your conduct; our enemies appear at least twenty to one; divide your ammunition equally, and be steady; obey orders strictly, take steady aim, you cannot afford to throw away a single shot. Again I say be steady, be silent, and shew good discipline; when I see the moment, I will give you notice what to do for your safety."

I walked about for some time examining the motions of the enemy, then called upon the Shelmaliers to examine their guns, and get them in order; these men had long guns for shooting water-fowl on their lakes, which carried a ball one-fourth further than a musket. They fell in; my number altogether this day was seven hundred and eighty-six. I placed the long guns in front, then the muskets, and the pikes in the rear, I ordered them to march slowly, the band to play "*God speed the Irish.*" I watched the

1798. motions of the enemy closely, and having advanced about a mile towards them, I ordered the Shelmaliers to fall on their knees, and suppose themselves shooting geese on the Blackwater. Sixteen of them fired at once, I saw an instant gap in the enemy's line. "Charge again my brave boys!" said I, "the line at Balliboy is breaking." I advanced again and gave them another volley, the trumpet sounded, and I beheld a hurry and bustle in their lines. I now made a feigned dash towards Imail, watching their motions, ordering my men to proceed in quick time after me, but not to go before me, to be steady, and I would disappoint the enemy once more.

We had a great advantage over them, not being encumbered with pouches, cross-belts, or heavy accoutrements, with a good road, while they had an intricate boggy mountain, with the passes of which they were unacquainted, so that we could retreat two perches to one they could advance. Notwithstanding I found they were surrounding us in all directions; we retreated, keeping up our fire, and checking their advance. All along I had a retreat in view, but I did not let any one know my plan, lest I might be be-

trayed, and the line of retreat cut off. I also thought, that had my own men known of it, they would have taken French leave of me; but now they all thought their safety depended on obedience, and they were steady. The line of retreat I had in view, was an old path, by which the miners formerly descended from their work. The army had now advanced so far towards Imail, that they could not intercept our retreat, so we wheeled about and got safely to nearly the top of the mountain, on the north side of the Glen, where we found a few of the light brigade, who were so much fatigued by forced marches, as to be incapable of much exertion. I ordered the Shelmaliers to give them a volley, and let them know what sort of subjects they had to deal with, on which they gave way, very much to my satisfaction and surprise. I was determined to fight to the last, knowing well if we were taken alive, we should put the government to no small expense at some rope-walk in Dublin. 1798.

When the enemy, advancing from Balliboy, saw this transaction, they began to run, both men and officers, but could not stop my Shelmaliers. I must do the troops justice on this

1798. occasion, they behaved gallantly, and exerted themselves exceedingly, stripped to their shirts, to get within shot of us, and often fired, but it was without effect. The troops from the other side, when they saw the soldiers from Balliboy running in their shirts, mistook them for my people, and began to fire on them as rebels, with small grape shot, which was very useful and amusing to me. The first discharge killed seventeen men, the trumpet sounded, and the firing ceased.

At this time we had gained a hill, at least a mile and a half from the enemy, and were in perfect safety. I ordered my men to give thanks to God for our safe deliverance, and then to sit down to rest, for we were much fatigued. The troops from Balliboy still advanced upon us in pursuit; but whenever they came within shot I ordered my Shelmaliers to give them a volley, as a reward for their trouble. The other troops were at too great a distance to support them, and separately, I cared little for those from Balliboy. They drove me off the first hill, or rather I left it to save them the trouble; but every time they came within reach we gave them a round in retreat, and I think

some of the shots of the Shelmaliers astonished them not a little.* 1798.

In the evening of this day I was reinforced with 140 men, who brought with them two prisoners, named Marks and Chapman, from Ashford Bridge. I had not time to try them, but I told the party they were two men who attempted to take me after my house was burned. When my men heard this they piked them immediately. This transaction took place on the mountain over the Seven Churches. It put the commanders of the army in a great rage when they found themselves out-manœuvred, and

* The prowess of the Shelmalier marksmen in the rebel ranks, has been already noticed in the note at p. 90. The appearance of the Shelmaliers with their guns gave extraordinary confidence to the insurgents, and when they had even a single cannon to support the Shelmalier long shots, (*see page* 181) the combination made the rebels confident of success. The fragment of a popular song of this period, whch I picked up last summer (1836) in a tour through the county of Wexford, asserts that

"At the Windmill hills, and at Enniscorthy,
The British fencibles they ran like deers;
But our ranks were scattered, and sorely battered,
For the want of Kyan and his Shelmaliers."

Esmond Kyan was captain of the rebel artillery in the attack on Arklow. See notes on p.p. 59, 60.

1798. came up to the bodies of these two men; but the shades of night put an end to this day's turmoil, and we were in perfect safety from our enemies.

I now called a council of war as to our point of retreat, and it was determined that we should go to Oakwood, Knockadrew, and Knockalt, on the King's River, about six miles to the westward of the Seven Churches, where we then were; and, notwithstanding the darkness of the night, and the intricate route, we had no occasion, like a ship at sea, to fire a gun for a pilot, for we had the best guides in the country marching with us.

On our march we met with flocks of sheep belonging to Samuel Snell, George Manning, of Ballytegue, and my old friend, ——— ———*, and notwithstanding the advanced period of the night, we set the butchers to work, and had a comfortable meal of mutton chops and boiled potatoes, which did us no harm after our fatigue. We then retired to our quarters without fixing pickets, as no spy or informer could possibly know our route.

* See page 14 *et seq.*—the same name occurs here.

I was up early, and each man, on my firing the signal, falling in, we were soon on the march. I changed the countersign, and marched at the head of my men, asking them questions respecting the day before. They expressed their gratitude and delight at the way I had got them safe out of that difficulty, and declared themselves determined to obey my orders on all occasions. I call this affair the battle of the Hills of Glenmalure. 1798.

My head-quarters were at Oliver Hoyle's house. I walked about the whole day examining the country, to lay my plans for future proceedings, in case the army should be polite enough to pay me another visit. In the evening I received an express to inform me, that Hunter Gowan* had

* In the affairs of this eventful period, Mr. Hunter Gowan took an active part, and was a zealous partizan, as the following notices of him by Mr. Hay evince; which will of course be received with due allowance.

"Mr. Hunter Gowan had for many years distinguished himself by his activity in apprehending robbers, for which he was rewarded with a pension of 100*l.* per annum, and it were much to be wished that every one who has obtained a pension, had as well deserved it. Now exalted to the rank of magistrate, and promoted to be captain of a corps of yeo-

1798. taken up his quarters with his yeoman cavalry at Aughrim, and that he vauntingly declared, "he would make a sixpenny loaf sufficient for the breakfast of Holt and his men by the Satur-

men, he was zealous in exertions to inspire the people about Gorey, with dutiful submission to the magistracy, and a respectful love of the yeomanry.

"On a public day in the week preceding the insurrection, the town of Gorey beheld the triumphal entry of Mr. Gowan at the head of his corps, with his sword drawn and a human finger stuck on the point of it.

"With this trophy he marched into the town, parading up and down the streets several times, so that there was not a person in Gorey who did not witness this exhibition, while in the meantime the triumphal corps displayed all the devices of Orangemen. After the labour and fatigue of the day, Mr. Gowan and his men retired to a public house to refresh themselves, and *like true blades of game*, their punch was stirred about with the finger that had graced their ovation, in imitation of keen fox-hunters who *whisk* the bowl of punch with the brush of a fox before their boozing commences. This captain and magistrate afterwards went to the house of Mr. Jones, where his daughters were, and while taking a snack that was set before him, he bragged of having blooded his corps that day, and that they were as staunch bloodhounds as any in the world.

"The daughters begged of their father to show them the croppy finger, which he deliberately took from his pocket and handed to them. Misses dandled it about with senseless exultation, at which a young lady in the room was so

day following." I smiled at the expression, but took no further notice of it, being aware that those who fetch can carry, and are very likely to do so. However, I determined, in my own mind, to pay my brave Hunter a visit, and spent 1798.

shocked, that she turned about to a window, holding her hand to her face to avoid the horrid sight.

"Mr. Gowan perceiving this, took the finger from his daughters, and archly dropped it into the disgusted lady's bosom. She instantly fainted, and thus the scene ended.

"Mr. Gowan constantly boasted of this and other similar heroic actions, which he repeated in the presence of Brigade Major Fitzgerald, on whom he waited officially, but so far from meeting with his wonted applause, the major obliged him instantly to leave the company."

According to Mr. Hay, "Annesley Brownrigg, Esq. a magistrate of the county of Wexford, received nine-and-thirty charges of pillage and slaughter against Mr. Hunter Gowan, and on the informations being submitted to General Hunter, he sent out a party of the Mid-Lothian cavalry to conduct him prisoner to Wexford, whither he was brought accordingly, and there it was determined to bring him to trial. Mr. Brownrigg returned home in the mean-time to collect the evidence, but it was previously settled that he should have sufficient notice; but on the day appointed for the trial, no prosecutor attending, Mr. Gowan of course was discharged.

"An official letter had been despatched in due time, yet he did not receive it until it was a day too late. Whether the

1798. the night in contemplating how I could do it in the most genteel and soldier-like manner. Next morning "my moving magazine" arrived with

miscarriage of the letter was by accident or design, continues yet a secret."

To these statements, Mr. Hay adds: "Of these [corps of yeomanry] that which attracted the greatest notice, was under the command of Mr. Hunter Gowan, which it was found impossible to restrain from pillage and slaughter. It was after the rebellion was suppressed, that this body of them received appointments as a cavalry corps, and as several of them were not owners of a horse, they took a speedy mode of mounting themselves without any expense. They scoured the country, as they termed it, and brought in, without any ceremony, the horses of the wretched cottagers.

"On a day of inspection by Major Fitzgerald, however, the poor claimants recovered their horses, and the motley banditti as the major termed them, were thus transformed into dismounted cavalry."

The following document is printed in the Appendix to Sir Richard Musgrave's History of the Irish Rebellion.

"Erin go brach.

"*Proclamation of the People of the County of Wexford.*

"Whereas it stands manifestly notorious that James Boyd, Hawtrey White, *Hunter Gowan*, and Archibald Hamilton Jacob,* late magistrates of this county, have committed the

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* "These gentlemen were conspicuous for their loyalty."—*Musgrave.*

300 ball-cartridges, and information that my son had been killed by the cavalry on the side of Mauredum hill. 1798.

I fired my signal, and issued orders to be ready to march in thirty minutes, each man to put two days' provisions into his haversack. We marched about nine in the morning, and about two o'clock we reached Ballyhonal, a small village about a mile and a half from Ballymanus, and three from Aughrim. I ordered the men to cook their dinners, and no man to leave the main body without orders. I directed Antrim John to place the pickets and

most horrid acts of cruelty, violence, and oppression, against our peaceable and well-affected countrymen.

"Now we, the people, associated and united for the purpose of procuring our just rights, and being determined to protect the persons and properties of those of all religious persuasions who have not oppressed us, and are willing, with heart and hand, to join our glorious cause, as well as to show our marked disapprobation and horror of the crimes of the above delinquents, do call on our countrymen at large to use every exertion in their power to apprehend the bodies of the aforesaid James Boyd, Hawtrey White, Hunter Gowan, and Archibald Hamilton Jacob, and to secure and convey them to the gaol of Wexford, to be brought before the tribunal of the people. Done at Wexford, this ninth day of June, 1798.

God save the People."

1798. out-posts, and then despatched a messenger to ascertain if my son had been killed. He soon returned with intelligence that my child was living, but that a boy had been killed, who was supposed to have been him. The child was met by a corps of cavalry, and was asked where he was going, he answered, he was seeking his father; they then asked his father's name, he said, Tom Howlet, which name sounding like Holt, one of the soldiers cut him down with his sword, cleaving his skull, and killed him on the spot. I knew and respected the boy's father many years; he was a miller, and lived at the Stamp-mill Bridge, near Newbridge. I regretted much that the poor child should have been sacrificed on account of the similarity of his father's name to mine. He was but eleven years old, exactly the age of my own son. These wanton, detestable, and abominable cruelties, excited feelings of animosity, ferocity, and revenge, and caused an increased shedding of blood, and the putting to death of many unfortunate victims, whose tender age and sex ought to have been sufficient to protect them from vengeance: it was my unfortunate lot to witness deeds perpetrated on both sides, at

which my soul shuddered with horror and disgust, each party adducing the preceding cruelty as a justification of their own diabolical acts. 1798.

One of the pickets now informed me that four of my men had been dreadfully cut up in the shebeen-house at Ballymanus, where whiskey was sold; I instantly fired my signal, and commenced my march, lest others should get too much of this detestable beverage when taken to excess. I lost more men, and suffered more disasters from the effects of whiskey, than from the sword or musket of my enemies.

HOLT'S BATTLE OF AUGHRIM.

I had my battle of Aughrim, as well as General Ginkle, and in order to distinguish between them, I call it Holt's battle of Aughrim. I issued orders that the men should be silent and steady, and not leave their post or line of march on any account, reminding them of the mischiefs they had suffered from want of discipline, and the victories they had achieved by a contrary conduct. We advanced in quick time, and soon came in sight of Aughrim, where my gallant Hunter was lord of the ascendant at the head of his band of heroes, with whom he pro-

1798. mised to do so much. I soon saw him advancing to meet us. He had a gallant bearing, and seemed to promise to keep his word, at least to try to do so. I took a post on the side of Redena hill, near the confluence of the two branches of the Ovoca. John M'Evoy, of the Antrim, was my aide-de-camp this day, standing by my side, he saw the enemy present their muskets, and called out, "Down every man!" we all fell instantly. The enemy fired, and the ground was cut just above us with their balls. I never saw a better directed volley, but it did us no mischief. We were soon on our feet, and returned the compliment with some effect. I then ordered 150 of my men down to the river side, to get into the wood, but not to fire a shot until Gowan had advanced as far as Redena bridge, and then to get between him and the barrack. The party were not steady, and fired too soon; and the enemy perceiving themselves attacked from the wood, instantly retreated, both horse and foot, into the town. My brave Hunter, finding himself uncomfortably situated, and unable, or unwilling, to make effectual fight, abandoned the barracks,

and retreated across Aughrim bridge, and over Killycloragh hill. 1798.

We continued our pursuit, and seeing the rout they took, I called out, "Boys, are there any of you who can swim?" In two minutes I had forty men in the river, holding up their muskets with one hand, and swimming with the other, they soon got over, and commenced firing on the flank of the enemy's line, whilst I kept up a fire on their rear. The valiant Hunter Gowan was now forced from his line of march, and being turned, took the road towards Whaley's Abbey. It gave me pleasure to see the gallant Hunter twice dismounted, but the third horse carried him safe off out of our reach. From that day he never headed a corps. I have heard he received a wound, but of this I am not certain, at all events, his vain boast of "the sixpenny loaf" turned out a flam. We continued our chase as far as Mr. Coates' house at Clone, and then returned to Aughrim, where my men were very impatient to burn every loyal man's house.

There lived in the town a sister of my wife, who came to me and requested me to save her house, which I promised to do, but never had a

1798. more difficult engagement to fulfil. There also lived there a man named Bolan, who sometimes sent me provisions, whether from regard or fear I cannot tell. I caused his house to be protected also, but, lest the army should burn it in retaliation, suspecting his loyalty, I broke every window in it, and wounded himself with a sword in several places. The barrack was completely consumed, and every house in the town that we believed to belong to our enemies.

After taking some refreshment we returned to Ballyhorra; about sunset we put out our pickets, and then retired to bed, that is, those who could procure a bed, but most of us bivouacked in the best way we could.

Next morning early one of the pickets brought intelligence that a small party of the military were marching towards Tinnahely. I immediately ordered out some cavalry, proceeded in pursuit, and soon came in sight of them. This party of the king's soldiers consisted of twenty-four men, with a commissary, fourteen cars and horses, and a gentleman of the name of Coates, who, with the commissary, were in a coach. I heard afterwards they were going to Tinnahely for wheat belonging to the said Mr. Coates.

They were proceeding along by the Derry river, and as soon as they saw us, the soldiers threw away their arms and ammunition, and stripping to their shirts, began to run as fast as their legs could carry them, except four men who mounted behind some of the drivers, and rode off with the coach as fast as they could gallop. We pursued the fugitives in all directions. I got within pistol-shot of the coach, and attempted to fire, but missed, and I was surprized to find there was no priming in the pan. I immediately shouted out, and two of the soldiers who were riding double flung down their arms on the road and made for a shrubbery. Seeing this I dismounted, and took up their muskets, which I fired after them; one of the men screamed loudly, but whether from a wound or fear I cannot say. 1798.

My men returned with three prisoners, fourteen horses and cars. The horses were good, and I mounted my men with them, thus adding to the strength of my cavalry. The cars we burned on the road.

The prisoners were brought to head-quarters, and upon trial two were found guilty of being Orangemen, and were shortly after put to

1798. death. There was but little commiseration for these fellows, my people alleged that they were known to be in the habit of informing against United Irishmen, and procuring their destruction. The third prisoner I saved from death, he was but twelve years of age, his name was ——. Since my return from New South Wales, he called to see me, and returned me thanks for pleading his cause, and interfering to save his life when on his knees, and the musket levelled at him. It was a great consolation to me to have preserved him. The scenes of cruelty I witnessed at this period are beyond human belief and comprehension. These men were tried and put to death before I was aware of it, and I came up but just in time to save this poor boy.*

* Sir William Betham has supplied the following interesting note upon the above passage in Holt's Autobiography; —Sir William has confided to me the name of the party, who is still living, and at whose particular desire it is here suppressed; although I cannot enter into his views on the subject. "This boy was nephew to an architect and land-surveyor in the county of Wexford. His friends in Dublin were anxious to send him to his uncle, and entrusted him to the care of a military escort. He describes the soldiers as beguiling the way by talking of what they should do if attacked by the rebels. If horse, they were to form a hollow

On the Sunday morning following we marched 1798.
to Knockannaga, a mountainous place, where was a Roman Catholic chapel. Several of the men wished to hear mass, which was then

square, and a variety of other manœuvres were discussed. While they were proceeding on the road leading to Tinnahely, the report of a musket alarmed the whole party, which increased into confusion by the fall of the commanding officer's horse which was shot dead. The party had proceeded without caution and now found themselves really in great danger. In an instant they saw in one point and bearing upon two sides a large body of rebels furiously rushing on to the attack. The escort, panic struck, threw down their arms and fled, leaving the carts, their arms, and baggage, to be taken possession of by our enemies, "with two men and myself," adds my informant.

"From being so young," he continued, "and not disposed to run, the rebels paid no attention to me, but a furious looking hag of a woman who had one-half of a pair of tailor's shears tied upon the end of a pole, (thus making a kind of pike) came running towards me with murder in her eyes, which made me think it full time to take to my heels. I did so, and was able to outrun her; but a man who met me seized me, and brought me to the camp a prisoner, but he saved me from this she-devil. We were instantly stripped, were concluded to be informers, and were doomed to death. One was directly piked before my eyes, and suffered dreadful misery before he died. The other begged for the mercy of being shot, and after some little hesitation, a man advanced with a musket which he placed within a foot of the wretched man's head, fired, and literally blew the roof off his skull.

"I was standing by shivering, waiting my fate, when a

1798. celebrating, and we went in, as many of us as could get room, bringing our arms with us. When the priest saw the fire-arms, he said, "Gentlemen, you never saw weapons like these

man advanced in the same manner to me, levelled his piece, drew the trigger, but missed fire. He tried it a second time. His gun did not go off. 'There must be something in this,' said he, 'what is your name?'"

"'_____'

"'Are you a Protestant?'

"'No—a Catholic.'

"'Say your prayers.'

"I passed through the form of blessing myself.

"'Where do your people live?'

"'In the county of Wexford.'

"At this moment a savage looking fellow came up saying, 'What is all this about? I will soon settle him. What is all this collouging* about. He was in bad company, and must and shall suffer for it, let his religion be what it may. If he was a Protestant you would have settled him at once.'

"'Jones,' said the man who was interrogating me, 'you shall not do the boy harm, his people are with us, and some of them are in the camp. I will take him to the general.'

"Thus saying, he threw over me my clothes, and I was brought before General Holt. The general was surrounded by his officers, and when I appeared before him, he asked

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* A word commonly applied in Ireland to two persons talking together, no doubt the same as Cuiléz, a pair.—*Shaw's Dictionary.*

brought into the house of God before." I answered, "Sir, you never saw times like these, and you will oblige me by going on with the service of the mass, as probably some of the 1798.

me my name, and desired me to tell my story, which I did as truly as I could.

"'You have told the truth, my boy,' said Holt, 'and seem to be an honest boy'—then turning to Jones, he said in an angry tone, 'do not make war against children, this poor boy could never have had a hostile feeling against us: God forbid we should hurt him unnecessarily; and killing unjustly is murder, and will bring down God's judgments and vengeance upon us sooner or later, and with His blessing I will protect every child's life that falls into our power, and if any man commits murder, or cruelty towards the helpless, I will have him tried and found guilty of murder, and he shall surely die. Neither shall any prisoner be put to death without trial, unless he be taken in arms and in uniform, and let me see the man who will dare to act against these orders.'

"He then turned to me, and in a kind manner and voice said, 'Don't be alarmed or afraid, my boy, no one shall harm you; you shall be with me, and I will protect you! He then ordered me food, and as I was indebted to him for my life, I felt attached to him, and have ever since been grateful.

"I now became one of 'Holt's people,' and soon ran the chance of suffering from the army the death I so miraculously escaped from the rebels. The man who saved my life, was named Byrne, and finding that it was the usual policy of Holt to place every new recruit who joined him under the care or surveillance of a trusty person, I requested the general to place me under Byrne. He assured me I should be with

1798. men now before you may never see a priest or hear mass again; I think therefore it is your duty to comply with our reasonable request." One of my men, called by the name of "An-

Byrne, when I was not with himself, but he thought me a smart lad, and with a smile said he would make me his aid-de-camp, which he did, giving me a very nice pair of brass pistols, and these pistols when I made my escape from the rebels, I hid in a hole on the side of a hill, where they probably remain at this moment, as I have never told any one where I had hid them.

"I continued some weeks with the rebel army, and was witness to several extraordinary instances of General Holt's bravery and humanity, as well as of his determined character. At one time he was constantly attended by a very handsome young woman dressed in a green habit, a kind of uniform with epaulets, her name was ——, * she was the daughter of a farmer, and was called '*the general's lady*.' She was a determined rebel, and appeared highly gratified with her distinction. This lasted for some weeks, but at length Mrs. Holt joined the army, and from that time the heroine in the green uniform disappeared, and we saw no more of her. On the dispersion of our main body, I wandered about with Byrne for some days in hunger and dismay, anxiously looking out for a way of escape, which he also desired as much as I did, and determined to adopt. We slept in a cabin together one night, and were up early and on the look out, and seeing

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* Without any breach of confidence, I am enabled from contemporary documents to state that this young woman's name was Byrne.

trim John," then remarked to his reverence, 1798.
"If you do not say mass now I will take care you never shall say it any where else." The priest took the hint, and went on with the ceremony, and it was well for him that he did so, for Antrim John declared, that had the priest refused, he would have shot him at the altar, and I believe he would, for he was a violent tempered man.

no one, sat down on a ditch to eat some boiled potatoes that we had brought with us. We were thus employed, when the report of a musket alarmed me, and at the same instant Byrne fell dead. I took to my heels in the opposite direction to that from which the report came, and on turning my head saw behind me the party of yeomanry at a distance, one of whose muskets had stretched my poor friend lifeless. The others fired at me, and I heard the balls whistling past me, but they did me no injury. The nature of the ground enabled me soon to get out of sight, and knowing the country, I got away, and the yeomanry soldiers soon gave up the chase.

"A day or two after I saw a party of the king's troops at a distance, when I determined to give myself up at all hazards, and I boldly advanced towards them. Being alone and unarmed, and almost naked, they permitted me to approach unmolested; I was taken prisoner and brought before the officer, who heard my story. Honestly and truly I told him all that I knew, and he ordered me to be taken to the next station, where I received food and an old coat, and in a few days was sent to Dublin, where I joined my friends."

1798. When prayers were over, the priest sent to request me to take refreshment with him; we had some conversation together; there were three other gentlemen with him, and they were all aware that I was not "a *mass man*."

On my return to quarters in the evening an express arrived, with information that twenty-four of the King's County militia were coming to join me from Aughavanagh. I ordered my horse to be saddled, and taking five of my chosen men with me, set out to meet them, leaving orders that a good beef cow should be killed to entertain them on their arrival, and that a party should be in readiness to receive them with due honours, by presenting arms, which was done accordingly. I handed them over to Captain Hacket, and directed them to get double allowance for a week, promising to take a double portion of work out of them afterwards. Having dined, I went to see them: two of this party were musicians, one played the violin, the other the flute: they played us a tune or two, and we had a dance, and thus we had our alternations of pleasure and sadness, like all our fellow-mortals.

The King's army at this time were destroying

all the cooking vessels in every house they came to, in order to starve me and my men, I ordered my men to do the same, but took an opportunity to send a letter to General Jones, requesting him to put a stop to this stupid and useless proceeding, which only distressed the poor people,—as well as to the burning of houses, and the brutal treatment experienced by females; and I suggested that no male under sixteen years of age should be put to death, promising that I would observe the same rule. In a few days I received an answer agreeing to the proposal, and adding, that the General regretted this understanding was not thought of sooner. After it there were no acts committed of a barbarous and cruel kind. 1798.

I remained in the camp till the Sunday following, as I expected a visit from my brother, William Holt, a builder by trade, and ordered out twenty-four of my best cavalry to go to meet him. We set out very early, and crossed over Ballymanus, towards Redena bridge, where we perceived eight soldiers and a serjeant, with some baggage, proceeding towards Aughrim. I said, "Boys! here is some game for us."

We bore down upon them, and on getting

1798. near them they soon found out who we were. I rode in front, and perceiving there were but nine of them, I ordered my men to halt, and reversed my fire-arms, to let the serjeant know I did not intend to fire on them. The small party of soldiers stood conscious of being overpowered by numbers, and as I approached the serjeant, he presented me with his sword, which I refused to take. On turning round to the cars, I saw a well-looking woman and five children, they were much terrified. I asked the serjeant if it was his wife? he said, "Yes, sir." I then went over to her and took her by the hand, saying, "Madam, do not fear, I will do no harm either to you or your husband." She still wept bitterly, and the poor children cried out, "Oh, sir, do not kill daddy." These poor innocents made me think of my own. I then ordered the soldiers to drive on the cars to Aughrim, and turning to the serjeant's wife, I said, for I had learned her name by asking that of her husband, "Mrs. Jones, did you ever hear of the man they call General Holt?"

"Yes, sir," she replied, "but surely you are not him? I am told he is a terrible man."

"Madam," said I, "the devil is not as black

as he is painted. I certainly am that person you so much dread." 1798.

We then proceeded to the town, and halted at Michael Bolan's, where I ordered a gallon of ale to be given to the soldiers, and brought serjeant Jones, his wife and children, into the house, and had bread, butter, and cheese, given to them, with ale and punch, and made them comfortable. The poor woman could not keep her eyes off me; she was incredulous, and could only believe that I showed so much mercy merely to be the more cruel at last.

I told serjeant Jones I should search his baggage, and if I found flints, powder, ball-cartridge, or fire-arms, in it, I should be very angry. He assured me there was nothing of the kind, or he would have honestly told me, and if I found any I might shoot him immediately. I then asked him if his regiment was to meet eight of my men, in the same situation, did he think they would have put them to death? Both the serjeant and his wife said they would certainly have done so. Then said I—"I will set a good example, and give my compliments to General Jones,* and tell him, I hope it will not be

* *Quere*, St. John?

1798. thrown away." I then called for pen, ink, and paper, and wrote the following order:—

"I command all and every United Irishman to let the bearer, William Jones and company, pass from Aughrim to Rathdrum unmolested, and any person acting contrary to this requisition, shall be punished in the severest manner. Given under my hand at Mr. Bolan's, Aughrïm, Sunday evening.

"General Joseph Holt."

I sent twelve of my own guard with them as far as Whaley's Abbey, fearing, if they were attacked, they might be killed before they could produce my pass. They proceeded unmolested, and my men returned with my brother. He had but two miles to come to me from his own house. I placed my pickets, and sat down and drank punch with him till about two o'clock in the morning, when he set off on his return home. We had much conversation respecting my affairs, and I instructed him as to my wishes and intentions.

On his way back he was unfortunately intercepted by a supplemental corps called, in deri-

sion, the "*Bondmen of Cronebane*," a poor set of rascals, without valour, honour, or honesty, and a disgrace to his Majesty's uniform; they seized and made him prisoner, dragged him to Rathdrum, and told him he would be hanged the next day, for going to see that villain his brother. 1798.

My brother could have driven half-a-dozen of these fellows before him, but they were too many for him, unarmed as he was. He was lodged in the guard-house, and several of them waited to give evidence against him next day, when he was to be tried under martial law. It was no difficult matter then for a hard-mouthed and flinty-hearted villain to swear away the life of an innocent man. There was in the corps a man of this description, named Thomas Lewins, a Roman Catholic, who reformed from that faith, not because he thought Protestantism better, but for filthy lucre, and to get into favour with Thomas King, Esq., the captain of this savage corps. This man, Lewins, was afterwards murdered by his own son, who was tried for the deed, found guilty, and hanged in this year, 1818, at Wicklow.

Many of the cruelties of the rebels were in

1798. retaliation of the previous enormities committed upon them by the yeomanry, who, in their turn, revenged themselves with increased acrimony, and thus all the kindlier and best feelings of humanity were eradicated, during the fervor of these horrid contests. Many of the corps of yeomanry were a disgrace to humanity, and the colour of their cloth. The rebels were not less atrocious or refined in their cruelties, but they were excited by the heads and hands above them, and considered their acts meritorious; few of them were really sensible of the true character of what they did. They were wild, uncultivated, ignorant creatures, whom it was difficult to control, and impossible to keep in discipline when excited.

Humanity had apparently fled from Ireland at this unhappy time; human victims were every where sacrificed to the demon of revenge, and their mutilated carcases exhibited with savage ferocity. It was difficult to persuade men that cruelty was not a part of their duty; the sacrifices of law were too slow, and men were so thirsty for the blood of their fellow-men, that the quickest possible mode was adopted to find a pretext for putting to death the unfortunate

wretch who had fallen into the power of tiger- 1798.
like monsters. This may be said of both sides. To meet with any one who was merciful in those days, was an uncommon occurrence, so much had men been corrupted and depraved by circumstances. I always felt reluctance in shedding of blood, except in battle, and it is a comfort to my mind, and a consolation which becomes more valuable as I grow older.

My men doubted the soundness of my judgment, and thought I had taken leave of my senses, when, instead of adopting the usual practice of putting to instant death my prisoners, after a mock trial, I treated Serjeant Jones and his party with refreshments, extended mercy to them, and sent them in safety to Rathdrum. His wife and children, my men well knew, I would protect, but why did I act differently, with respect to the soldiers, to the usual practice? My answer was, because I had the power. The twenty-four men I had with me were good men who obeyed orders, men I could trust, and who would not question the policy of my acts. Hitherto I had lamented atrocities in silence, but had not the power to restrain them, without endangering my own life.

1798. As soon as I had authority sufficiently strong to enforce my commands, I did not let an opportunity slip in exhibiting the natural bent of my inclination, feeling satisfied that humanity is never allowed to go without its reward, even in this world.

Had I glutted my revenge, and imbrued my hands in the innocent blood of Serjeant Jones and his eight comrades, my brother would have fallen a victim to his affection in visiting me, which, by the law of the period, was punishable with death. When that grateful and worthy man, Serjeant Jones, heard that a prisoner of the name of Holt had been lodged in the guard-house, he instantly went to see him, and finding that he was my brother, the kind-hearted and brave fellow, with tears of joy in his eyes, shook him by the hand, saying, "Fear not, Mr. Holt, your brother saved the lives of myself, my wife, my children, and my eight comrades yesterday, and treated us with every civility; I will do my best to save your life to-day, and prove my gratitude to that humane, and much-scandalized and misrepresented man." He then left my brother, and went to General Jones—[Quære,

St. John?]—and related to him how he had been taken and treated by me. 1798.

The General, at first, would scarcely credit the Serjeant's statement, believing, from the common report of my enemies, that I was a fierce and cruel monster guilty of all the atrocities laid to the charge, and committed by some of those under my command. But the Serjeant produced my pass, and called the men of his party to vouch for the truth of his story, whom the General examined separately, and finding them all to agree in every particular, he said it was a shame to give such a character, as he had heard of me, to a man of so much good feeling and humanity. Serjeant Jones then told the General there was a brother of mine in the guard-house, charged with being in company with me and the rebels the day before. Upon which, the General immediately ordered him to go to the officer of the guard, and desire him to bring the prisoner before him, which being done, my brother was questioned as follows:

"What is your name?"

"William Holt."

"Are you brother to the robber chief?"

1798. "I am."

"Were you on a visit to him yesterday?"

"I was. I had not seen my brother for a long time, and receiving an intimation from him that I might see him at a certain place, I have transgressed so far as to go and see him. I wish sincerely he could safely leave the business he is now engaged in, which he never would have joined but from necessity, to save his life; which was unjustly threatened, and his house burned. I have never joined in the rebellion, or interfered in any way; but I know, by going to my brother, my life is forfeited, and I cannot help it. God's will be done."

The General looked at him for sometime without speaking, overpowered by his generous feelings. At length he recovered himself, and said, "No, Holt, your life is not, shall not be forfeited; it is much to be regretted that so fine a fellow as your brother should die the death which, I fear, eventually awaits him. He mercifully saved the lives of nine of his Majesty's soldiers yesterday, and sent them in safety to this place. He gave them a pass for their security, and I will do the same to you. I believe your story of your brother's misfor-

tunes, and I hope some opportunity will occur by which his life may be saved." 1798.

I am inclined to think that this brave and generous officer did not let this affair remain unknown, as I have good reasons for knowing he interested himself for me with General Moore, and I am sure it served me much in the time of my adversity, which was approaching. My brother got his pass of safety, and did not abuse the kindness of the General.

I was duly informed of this transaction, and was very anxious to come in contact with the Cronebane corps, to repay them the obligation. Next morning the pickets brought me word that a party of military were marching towards Aughavanagh, across Ubank's Hill to Muckla Hill. I went immediately to my look-out place, and on viewing them with my spy-glass, I saw that they were the very corps, the Bond Men of Cronebane, I so much wished to have an opportunity of complimenting. I called my men to arms, and drew them up behind a large ditch, so that our numbers could not be discovered. The enemy advanced upon me to within musket-shot, but I kept my men quiet, wishing the Cronebane fellows to advance farther into the

1798. valley which lay between us, and commence the ascent of the rising ground on which I was posted. I then, as I walked before my men, with my sword drawn, addressed Captain King, by means of my trumpet :—

"I wish you had the courage to meet me in single combat, and let our men look on. You little thought when my house was burned, and my property destroyed, that I could or would give you so much trouble ; and by my oath I could now die easy if I was after settling the matter with you."

One of my men, Francois Joseph, asked me permission to fire a shot ; I told him I thought they were too far off, but he said his rifle was good. He fired, and his assertion proved true, for he brought down his man, as I was told by Captain King in the Castle of Dublin, when he paid me a visit to try and get me to betray my people ; but he was disappointed, as were all others who came on that errand.

When Joseph had fired his piece, the trumpet sounded, and I began to suspect I was about to be attacked on more sides than one. I therefore said to my men, we are likely to be entrapped, but be steady and obedient to orders, and

we will get out of our difficulties. I will show 1798.
those fellows that my head is as good as any of theirs. I had sent Patrick Dogherty of the Carlow out as a picket on my rear, but the wretched coward had fled on the approach of the enemy without firing the signal; the trumpet sounded behind me, and I was convinced there was an attempt to surround me. I instantly gave orders for the men to follow me in open and single files, that the enemy should not take off my number. I marched across the side of Ballyhena, towards Aughavanagh, and had the good fortune to get about twenty perches of the ground to the enemy's right, when I was attacked by seven different divisions. I called out, "Let no man run—keep together;" and to show them a good example, I alighted from my horse, and having an excellent fusee, I used it with effect. A very hot fire now commenced, and, to my grief, I knew the deficiency of my ammunition. However, I ordered my men to march, and fight as they retreated. They behaved well, they halted and fired in sections with great order and steadiness, and thus checked the enemy's advance. I had seven men wounded, but none killed, and I received a slight wound my-

1798. self, but not enough to cripple my exertions. At one period of the engagement I was nearly left alone, and when I perceived it, I cried out, "are you about to abandon your general, who never deserted you? Cowards only do that! Return to my support;" and, kneeling down, I fired my fusee. It told well. My men instantly came back to me; and when the enemy saw them running forward and make a movement in advance, they hesitated, halted, and were fearing that I had led them into a scrape. Their trumpet sounded a retreat, and again they returned home without their object. My head was safe on my shoulders—thanks be to God that it is so; and my men, with a few trifling exceptions, in sound skins. "My head," thought I, "is still worth more than General Craig bid for it." The corpses, in addition to the Cronebane fellows, which were engaged with us this day, were the Rathdrum, Northshire, Southshire, Tinnahely, Hacketstown, Donard, and some others that I do not now recollect.

I have already made some observations on the causes which led to the cruel shedding of blood at this period. The conspiracy to overturn the government and constitution cannot be ques-

tioned, and that it was chiefly confined to the lowest orders of the people, is also true, but it did not originate with them; of the intricate manœuvres of the planners of the scheme, who were among the higher classes of society, I can give no account. My acquaintance with rebels, and appearance among the principal actors in the rebellion was accidental; if I had not been placed exactly in the circumstances in which I stood, I should in all probability have been on the other side of the question. My habits, wishes, and inclinations, were that way; but like many others, strange as it may appear, I was driven into rebellion to save my life. Nor was my case one of uncommon occurrence. Many an unfortunate man was put to death by the yeomen, without inquiry or investigation, merely on the cry being raised against him, or the mere assertion of his enemy that he was a United Irishman, and after his murder no inquiry took place. I have been acquainted with many instances within my own knowledge, of a yeoman who, when he had got on his neighbour's horse, and his Majesty's cloth on his back, proceeding to revenge any old grudge or spleen which perhaps had been rankling in his 1798.

1798. vindictive breast for years, against an unfortunate neighbour, especially against the Roman Catholics; but it was not confined to them. I have heard a man say, "*Now is my time. I will have revenge and satisfaction.*" The result was, the miserable object of his dislike was shot, and the murderer's excuse was, that as the murdered was a united man, he had a right to shoot him. Martial law being in force, no further inquiry took place. On this the whole population became alarmed, not knowing who would be the next victim; the poor people quitted their dwellings, and had their nightly meetings to consult what was best to be done; their absence from home was considered sufficient evidence of guilt, and they generally came to the resolution that it was better to make a common cause against their oppressors, than to wait to be shot without mercy at home. Thus they became rebels, unwillingly, feeling acutely the wrongs and oppression they had suffered, they grew more like enraged tigers than men, and woe to the unhappy yeoman who fell into their power, he was instantly put to death often by a cruel and attenuated torture. The soldiers of the regular army, in a great degree, from acting with

the yeomanry, caught their feelings, and indulged in cruelties with an avenging spirit, but generally speaking, the animosity existed in the breast of the Irish peasant in its most exaggerated character against the yeomanry. The murder, in cold blood, of an orangeman or yeoman, was considered by the rebel a meritorious act of justice, and that of a rebel by the loyal party as no crime. These were grievous times, but these crimes, horrible as they were, originated in the innate mischief and wickedness which exists in man himself. Each party accused the other of cruelty and barbarous inhumanity, and the accusation on both sides was just; each were guilty, atrociously guilty, but each justified himself with the idea that his abominable acts were but the just retaliation of previous wrongs. Thus bad men commit a wrong, and set fire to a train of mischief, which when ignited, puts a whole country in a flame of misery and crime. My heart sickens at the recollections of this unhappy period; and I feel that I have given the reader enough of it. I have no desire to colour the crimes of either party, but I think it my duty as an honest man, to explain the causes which led to these melancholy results. The following 1798.

1798. is not a bad exemplification of this opinion :— When I wanted to recruit my forces, I would send a party to bring me a gentleman's or yeoman's horse, or play some mischievous trick upon them : the invariable result was, that in twenty-four hours some unfortunate man would be shot for it, and I would have plenty of recruits flocking in to my standard, who would relate that such an occurrence had happened, and that such a man was shot for it—the victim was generally a man of quiet and inoffensive habits. I usually replied, "it served him right, why did he not join me. If he had, he would now be living."

Since my engagement near Aughavanagh, I found the enemy were well informed of my motions and position ; I, therefore, felt it necessary to move about more rapidly. I had taught them, by their dancing after me, the mountain passes, and could perceive that they knew better than formerly, my mode of carrying on the war. I began to fear too, that the reward offered for my head might gain it, and I resolved to make short stands in every place, so as to baffle spies and informers ; and I kept my intentions still more to myself than I had hitherto done.

Having nearly run the country out of pro-

visions, in my immediate neighbourhood, I marched from Oakwood and Knockalt, on the King's River, to the west side of the county, and there received information that there were several corps of cavalry at Blessington, with a great quantity of cattle in a park, under their protection. I fired my signal for marching, and went through Black-ditches, over the King's River to Balliboy, and soon came in sight of Blessington. 1798.

A man named Jonathan Eves who lived near Balliboy; half quaker, half protestant, a good but no party man; who had harboured several wounded men in his house, and with the assistance of his amiable daughters, had cured them completely, was well known to me, and I considered him worth ten men in the open field, and prized him highly as a valuable friend. This poor man was met by Henry Downes, one of my men, and made prisoner. I had too much to attend to, to try him myself, and knowing I should acquit him, I thought to take him out of harm's way, and I ordered him to be sent to head quarters, there to be kept till my return. At the moment I did not consider that a man going into battle, might not return at all, but

1798. the hurry of the moment was fatal to poor Eves. I heard a shot, and turning about, I saw the poor man lying dead on the road. Downes called out—"General, I have saved you the trouble of trying him, I tried him myself and shot him."

"More villain you," was my answer.*

* Henry Downes, who appears to have been a deserter from the King's County Militia, was ultimately taken and hanged.

A collection of treasonable lyrics with the following title page, was printed and circulated in Ireland, immediately previous to the insurrection of 1803.

"Paddy's Resource or the Harp of Erin attuned to Freedom, being a Collection of Patriotic Songs, selected for Paddy's amusement.

"*Whilst tyrants reign, in guilty state,*
And strive base slavery to prolong,
My heart with FREEDOM'S *hopes elate*
Shall join in LIBERTY'S *sweet song!*"

"Dublin, printed by the Printer hereof. (Price an Irish Hog)."

This little volume, now one of extreme rarity, contains a national lament for the fate of the murderer of honest Jonathan Eves, entitled

"ERIN'S MARTYR.

"Sacred to the memory of HENRY DOWNES, a Private in the King's County Militia, who was hanged at Malahide, for

The firing in the town, from the steeple of the church of Blessington, now became so hot, that I had not time to consider about poor Eves, 1798.

joining the Irish Army, and fighting for the LIBERTY of his Native Country!

"Brave patriotic Irish friends
Who act on Union's plan;
Of him who fought to gain your ends,
The glorious Rights of Man!
I sing the never-dying feats,
Let all encore the sounds;
While every echo round repeats—
'Green Erin lost her Downes!'

"Beneath high Heaven's azure vault
A finer youth ne'er stood;
With him each action, word, and thought,
Were used for Ireland's good.
While Virtue, Liberty and Truth,
Among mankind abounds,
All men will prize that Irish youth
The famous Henry Downes.

"Young Downes for Ireland's Freedom fought
On Erin's verdant plains;
We'll all keep him alive in thought
While blood flows in our veins.
He rushed forth tyrants to repel
Thro' dangers, scars, and wounds,
And many Orange villains fell
Beneath the hand of Downes.

1798. and as I could not bring him to life, I attended to the business I had come about, and issued orders that a shot should not be fired until I

"When we had almost beat our foes
And set green Erin free,
The trembling tyrants did propose
A partial amnesty.
By this old scheme, they soon withdrew
The unsuspecting clowns;
But while they could, a virtuous few,
Resisted with brave Downes.

"Prevent, my brethren, if you can
Your manly tears to flow—
Young Downes, that brave United-Man
To Dublin then did go;
That chief of pimps and panders — Sirr,
In his nocturnal rounds
Came on the manly pride of Birr,
The Patriot Henry Downes.

"The cowardly villain forward made
Our hero to arrest;
But the Irish *Casca* broke his blade
Against the ruffian's breast.
Alone, sometime, the youth withstood
'Gainst all his trained blood-hounds;
'I'll fight till death, for Ireland's good'
Says Erin's martyr Downes.

"At length by Sirr's myrmidons hemm'd,
Then by court martial tried,

gave permission. Barney Holligan, of the King's County, was riding beside me as we entered the town; a man ran out of a house and fired at him, and wounded him slightly in the arm; he instantly turned round and knocked out the wretch's brains with the butt of his musket. We had not advanced far, before a ball from the steeple struck one of my men in the breast, it passed through his coat and waistcoat, and lodged outside his shirt; he fell; I dismounted, and examining him, found the ball which had only caused a slight contusion. He was more frightened than hurt.—He said he was shot. 1798.

And (by that court, alas! condemn'd)
Was hanged at Malahide.
Oh! is he dead? of Miles's race
Gay Union still surrounds;
We swear by Him who fills all space,
Revenge we'll have for Downes.

"Now, rally, O! United sons
Of green *Erin-go-bragh*,
Rush on—rush on—with pikes and guns;
Repeal the tyrant's law;
To burst your country's heavy yoke
And trample kings and crowns;
Have liberty in every stroke,
And still remember Downes."

1798. "That's true," said I, "and as I suppose you are dead, here, my boys, take and bury him immediately."

He did not admire this ceremony, and jumped up as well as any of us. While we were advancing towards the steeple, I sent about a third of my force by a circuitous route to the other side of the town, and as soon as this was accomplished, we commenced our attack in a more regular manner, whenever they made their appearance; while the rest of the men were driving the cattle out of the park. They drove away one hundred and fifty sheep, thirty-two cows and bullocks, and ten horses, and among them a very beautiful three-quarter-bred mare, belonging to parson Benson. I expected this would have induced the soldiers to quit the steeple, and give us battle, but they took no notice of it, and we set off on our return with the booty. Several old women on our march, came out of the cabins and asked me for a sheep. I told them to catch one as we had done; one woman immediately seized two strong wethers, and was dragged into a ditch, and upset several times, to the great amusement of my

men, and after all was forced to let go her hold, 1798.
and return home without the sheep.

On our return to the camp, I consulted with my officers, on the propriety of trying Henry Downes for disobedience of orders, and the murder of Eves, but they dissuaded me from it, and cautioned me on no account to attempt it; I thought their advice good, but I regretted bitterly the unfortunate fate of that excellent man.

Shortly after I heard that the Marquis of Waterford's lodge, in Hollywood Glen, was about to be made a barrack, and after consulting my officers, it was determined that we should burn it. I then ordered forty-nine of my best cavalry to get ready for the excursion, and when we reached to the head of the glen, the men 13 Sept.
were anxious to get into the house, no doubt to plunder it before it was burned. I sat on my horse outside, but hearing the cries of a female, I dismounted and went in, and found a young woman supplicating them not to murder her. I ordered them to let her out; they said, they were not intending to abuse her person, but she had money about her, and have it

1798. 13 Sept. they would. I endeavoured to extricate her, but to no purpose; they stripped her and found concealed fifty guineas in gold, and two watches, with some other articles of value, after which they let her go. The lodge was then set on fire. I had put tables against the cellar door, to prevent their seeing it, and so far succeeded in keeping them sober. They threw feather beds, looking-glasses, with other valuable articles, out of the windows.*

I ordered them to quit the place, and went to Miles Miley's, who kept a public house, and desired him to give them no liquor, but to bring up to the top of the hill three or four gallons of spirits, which was done. A great debate arose among the men, and on inquiry I found that one of them had picked up a great purse of guineas,

* "After the rebellion had existed some time, and had spread universal desolation in that country [Wicklow], the Marquis of Waterford repaired to his beautiful mansion at Hollywood, and, with his usual humanity and benevolence, announced that he would rebuild all the houses of the lower class of people, which had been burned or destroyed, provided they would return to their allegiance, and accept the amnesty humanely offered to them by government; but, instead of being touched with gratitude by this generous offer, they burned his house on the 13th of September."—*Musgrave*, App. xvi. 4.

which all claimed a fair share of. I desired 1798. 13 Sept. the money to be given to me, and getting the men into line, I paid for the spirits, and then divided the remainder of the contents of the purse equally, giving each man a guinea, two men came short, and I gave them the watches. Thus were all satisfied, and we returned to the camp, except a few who deserted and became professed robbers, an unhealthy trade by which men are apt to lose their lives sooner or later. I never knew but two men make money by robbing. One of these was Patrick Dogherty, the other James Devit, of Ballymacree: they got a large sum of money by thieving, with which they went to America; but what became of them there I never heard. For my part I was satisfied if I had enough to eat, and was able to guard against spies and informers. The next morning, I collected the men on parade, and addressed them on the dangers of the robbing system, assuring them that it would be certain to bring destruction on them some time or other.

I then took measures to see my wife, and ordered the men to be ready to march. We proceeded towards Glenmalure, and an hour

1798. after our arrival, she came to see me. She had heard that I had been wounded and lost one of my eyes. The same evening I received a letter from General Moore to the following effect:

"Mr. Holt,

"From the general account I have received of you, I should be glad to have some conversation with you: point out any place you think proper to meet me; bring as many of your men as you please, and I will bring with me only my servant. I will also bring with me a cold dinner, and if you let me know what will satisfy you for your losses, I will use my endeavours to get it for you,

"I am, &c.

"J. Moore."

"To Mr. Holt."

The bearer of this letter was Keogh, the miller of Whitestown Bridge. When I had read it, I handed the letter to Colonel Doyle, who read it out to the people. The moment he had finished, they appeared in a fury, and directly seized me and my wife, and placed us on our knees for instant execution. I was

astonished, and could not imagine what had come over the people. I asked what they meant, and why they treated me with so much brutal indignity? They answered, my wife had brought me that letter, and that I was going to make my escape and sell them all. My wife, who was very angry, exclaimed, 1798.

"Wretched and ungrateful men, why do not you stop the man who brought the letter, and who is riding down the hill on the gray horse there?"

They instantly followed him and brought him back, and he was examined before them all.

"Did you bring this letter to General Holt?"

"I did."

"Where did you get it?"

"From General Moore, who desired me to take it to Mr. Holt. I did not think it any crime to obey the general's commands, who could, if I refused, compel me to obey him."

He was then dismissed, and the people became calm and appeared ashamed of themselves. My wife could not restrain her indignation; she said she always expected the ungrateful savages would treat me in this manner, and that they would sacrifice the man who had

1798. brought them through so many difficulties and saved them from destruction so often. I have no doubt my expression of indignation and reprobation at the conduct of Henry Downes in murdering Eves, produced the combination against my life.

They now fixed a watch upon me, and had I attempted to go to the rear, I have no doubt that I should have been shot. Soon after a dispute arose among the men, which was very likely to have set one-half of them against the other; and to have ended in a battle. One party were very indignant that I and my wife should have been insulted. I interfered and reconciled them. The next morning, I called them together on parade, and addressed them as nearly as I can recollect as follows:—

"I did not expect that I should ever have witnessed any thing like the events of yesterday, I was elected your chief, because you thought me best calculated to serve you; I have not disappointed your expectations, I have brought you through many difficulties, always safely, often with victory. My fidelity I thought above suspicion, but I have been treated like a traitor, and degraded to the

situation of begging my life, had I condescended to do so; but I would not ask life at your hands, and had not my wife desired you to satisfy yourself by calling back Keogh, I should have been murdered. My life was not worth saving, if I was to be degraded; I have, therefore, determined to resign the command of men who know not how to value an honest leader. I am ready to become a private, and now you have nothing to do but to choose another chief; I hope you will find a man as honest as myself, and one more able and willing to serve you." 1798.

The men appeared dumbfounded; they looked like fools, hanging down their heads. At length those who had espoused my cause the day before, cried "A cheer for General Holt, we will have no other general; he shall be our chief, and let any man show his face who will insult him."

A general shout of approbation was the consequence, and they all appeared to have been really disgusted at and repentant of the treatment I had received. They all voluntarily made a promise of submission, and those who had been most vociferous against me, now

1798. began to fear the consequence of the re-action, and to tremble for their own safety, and appeared most zealous in my favour. But all this did not restore me to my former firmness and confidence; the unfortunate leader or chief of such a band of ruffians cannot often restrain their outrage and cruelty, or be sure of his own safety. Their inclination to thieve had been increased by permission to plunder the houses which had been burned, and they had broken out in mutiny, and even threatened the life of their commander.

I would have embraced General Moore's humane proposition, if I could have done so safely. Nothing would have given me more pleasure; my heart leaped with joy at the mere contemplation of it; but I was trammelled and burthened with the fate of others, whom I would not desert if I had been free to do so. Had I been so fortunate as to have had the proposed interview, I should have stipulated for all my followers as well as myself, and should have saved many from further crime, and others from a disgraceful termination of their existence. It was, however, ordered otherwise. Men often blindly struggle hard to effect their own de-

struction, and to bring on punishment for their sins. So it was with my people. 1798.

The circumstance which had occurred paralyzed my energies. I became reserved and distant to all about me, and walked by myself, brooding over my unhappy lot, and contemplating the consequences. The men had lost my confidence. I had lost theirs. Without submission and control over each other we must soon have been destroyed; but if ill blood and treachery existed in any single breast, a short period, not a day, could elapse before some one would have an opportunity of putting their wishes into execution. Many of the men were inclined to become robbers; they could not do so while I commanded. They were desperate and bloody-minded, and would not be delicate in their choice of means as to disposing of me. In vain did my best friends endeavour to cheer up my spirits, and try to prevail on me to forget the past transaction. In vain did they declare that any attempt at disobedience of orders, or want of discipline, should be punished with instant death. I endeavoured to compose myself, and determined, in my own mind, to act for myself as circumstances should suggest. I

1798. would ask advice of my officers, but would act by my own judgment. All again became apparently smooth, but the calm was only on the surface.

My "moving magazine" arrived at this period with her usual supply, and brought me intelligence that at the camp of the King's County Militia, which consisted of 160 men, forty were ready to desert to me, and if I advanced to their neighbourhood, these men would bayonet forty of their loyal comrades before they deserted, which would reduce that corps one-half, besides adding forty disciplined men to our strength.

Aware of the perilous situation in which I stood with my people, I would not act on the information of the "moving magazine," lest it might be false, and the attempt be a failure; and any such event would be attributed to treachery on my part. I, therefore, called a council of war, in order to ascertain the wish of the majority, and then called upon Colonel Doyle to obtain this information for me. Doyle was the only sensible man among them; Hacket having separated from us with eighty men, merely because I protested against robbing, for

the sake of plunder.* I did not regret Hacket's absence, beyond the reduction to our numbers of the eighty men that left with him, as our strength had been diminished by desertions at every opportunity. The men also began to dread the approach of long nights and cold weather. 1798.

Colonel Doyle communicated the intelligence to as many of the people as he thought necessary, and they requested to hear my opinion, which I gave them, when they unanimously agreed to follow any mode of proceeding which I thought best. I thanked them for their confidence in me, and desired them to retire to their quarters until further orders. I retained Colonel Doyle with me, to have the matter debated between us. I told him I had been often betrayed, and it behoved me to act with caution upon this occasion. The people knew that I was acquainted with every foot of ground on

* Sir Richard Musgrave has erroneously associated Holt with Hacket and his gang of robbers in the following passage.

"The mountains of Wicklow continued for many months after [the suppression of the rebellion] the asylum of a desperate banditti, who, under Holt and Hacket as leaders, committed plunder and assassination in all the adjacent country."

1798. which the camp was fixed, it being within gunshot of the ruins of my own house, and a quarter of a mile from Roundwood. "Sir," said Doyle, "I am not able to advise you; I therefore hope God will direct you for the best. You are beset with difficulties, but no other man has surmounted so many as you have."

The day had been wet, but the rain cleared off, and the evening was fine. I fired my signal, and ordered every man to be ready to march in an hour. This short notice prevented the spread of my intentions; spies were busy, but no man but myself knew what was about to be done; the blood-money bid for my head was a tempting sum, and many there were who desired to finger it. We proceeded without interruption till we came to Glenmalure river, which was very much swelled by the rain of the previous day. I halted till the rear came up, and took advice as to whether it was fordable, of which the opinions were various. I rode that day a huntress belonging to Buck Whaley, and leaped her into the river, keeping her head against the stream, and got over safely, but not without being wet to the chest. I then dismounted, and cried out, "Come, on boys,

cowards never gained anything." They came over, but we were obliged to send the horses back for the foot-men. The most unpleasant and anxious thing to me now, was how to get over Mrs. Holt, who was with us. I knew her to be a firm-minded woman, and that she would not be alarmed or quit the horse's back if she could keep it; so I advised her to cross the stream. One of the men asked her to carry him over with her; she desired him to jump up behind her, and they dashed into the stream. The horse was not able to swim with the weight of both, and the current was so rapid that they were thrown off; the horse coming over without them, they drifted into deeper water. I jumped in to their assistance, but they were driven on a sand-bank near the other side of the river. Before I reached them I was nearly suffocated and quite exhausted, being a bad swimmer. 1798.

A man named Miley, who had got over safe, cried out—"Boys, we must not lose the General, or we are all lost ourselves; I will venture my life to save him and his wife." So saying, he leaped in. He took me by the hand; I held my wife, and the other man held her other hand.

1798. Miley kept next the stream, and so brought us all over in safety. My wife lost her beaver hat, but it was picked up about twenty perches farther down the river. She also lost one of her shoes, but I did not fret much about it, as Mrs. Holt was safe, for I thought it was easier to get a shoe than a wife, although women were plenty enough at the time, particularly widows who had seen service.

We returned God thanks for our safe deliverance, and proceeded to a farm-house; having rapped at the door, we were admitted with a welcome, and I related our mishap to the young women of the house, requesting them to try if any of their shoes would fit Mrs. Holt, and also that they would exchange clothes with her. They instantly complied, and I paid them for the shoes and departed. We then marched across Cullentrough, Derrybawn, Knockfinn-bridge, Drummeen, and Old-bridge. We halted near Baltanamana wood, at the edge of the river, and were then within two miles of the place of our destination. Here I waited till the rear came up, and thus addressed my followers:—

"Soldiers, we are now within two miles of

the place of our operations, as soon as we are over this river I shall separate you into three divisions, and expect that every man will be steady, silent, and obedient to orders." 1798.

Few of them knew what I was about, and I believe, if soldiers knew what they were to encounter before they enlisted, they would not be tempted by the bounty; but they generally think they have only to walk about with smart red coats on their backs, and spend their pay.

Colonel Doyle also spoke to the men, saying, "If you take General Holt's directions, and carry them into effect, the business will soon be settled." I knew every inch of the river we were about to cross perfectly, and I reined my horse into it, and soon got over, calling upon the men to follow, on which one of them cried out, "He is going to sell us, or else he would never venture over as he did." I heard the words distinctly, and turning my horse re-crossed the stream, and called out for Doyle to seize and bring the man to me who had made use of that expression. Doyle answered, "I am looking for him; unfortunately, I do not know the voice, but if I can find him he shall

1798. suffer instant death." I then spoke to them as follows:—

"Wretches, it is not in my composition to sell any man, but I verily believe some of you will sell me to my enemies." I had my sword drawn, and was determined to cut down the first man, and to cut away had any of them replied. They were, however, silent. There then arose a great argument amongst them. I dismounted from my horse, and walked up and down. It was about twelve o'clock at night. Doyle, and some of the most sensible men among them, came to me to know what was to be done.

I desired them to go and inquire for the villain who had cried out that I was about to sell them, and to bring him to me, as I would run my sword through his heart. I then turned to my wife, and said, "I wish you were on the other side of this river, you would then be within two miles of a friend's house, where our children are."

She replied, "I will not quit you this night, for if you find out the person who has insulted you, I am sure, from your state of mind, you

will kill him, and then the others will put you to death." 1798.

I then determined to give up the enterprise I had undertaken,* and to extricate myself as soon as possible from connection with the scoundrel party I commanded. I found it impossible to keep them from crime, their whole mind now being bent on robbery; and they were tired of a chief who restrained that propensity.

I returned to Knockfinn-bridge, and went

* The information conveyed to Holt by his "darling moving magazine," of the disaffection of a large body of the King's County Militia, appears to have been perfectly correct. According to Sir Richard Musgrave,

"Many rebels in the county of Wicklow enlisted in the kings troops, while they were quartered there, merely for the purpose of obtaining arms and ammunition, and a knowledge of military discipline. On the night of the 21st September, twenty-two of the King's county militia, who had practised this base artifice, deserted with their arms and ammunition. Some yeomen cavalry were sent in pursuit of them, but the deserters having lain in wait, fired on them when they were in a deep road, with high hedges on each side, killed two of them, and wounded some more. This method was universally adopted by the rebels, for the above purposes, and to seduce the king's troops from their allegiance."

1798. along the road leading to the Seven Churches; then turning to my right on Glenmacanass, I entered a small village. The inhabitants appeared glad to see me, but I was inclined to think they would as soon have had my room as my company. My mind was gloomy, and excited at the same time with a determined spirit to sell my life dearly, should it be attempted. I could bear up against avowed enemies, and brave any danger or difficulty from without, but the hidden traitor or assassin I felt I could not counteract. The villain who shouted against me was but one, but he must have had associates who participated in his opinions and sentiments, or he would have been instantly seized by those about him, and delivered up to my vengeance. The majority, I did not doubt, were faithful, but I could not distinguish them; again I was a Protestant, and their fidelity hung loosely to me on that account. Not that the fellows I had about me cared much for any religion, but it was a pretext and excuse for their deceit. My notions of right and wrong were in direct hostility to theirs. The political feeling, or sense of injury which brought them out, in the first instance, was forgotten; and

living so long at free quarters, made them think robbery and murder lawful. 1798.

I ordered a bed to be prepared for my wife and myself, and desired the man of the house to stand picket all night, and told him if the army disturbed me without my getting notice, I would put every soul of his family to death. I also desired him to send to Brian Brady, and order him to put out pickets to the other end of the glen. I then went to bed, and told my wife, that the insults I had suffered were too great to be borne, and that I would form some plan to extricate myself from my present situation, which was become intolerable.

I marched early next morning, but fired no signal, leaving the rest to follow or not, as they thought proper, being determined to let them know I resented their conduct. I went to Oakwood, and stopped at Oliver Hoyle's house, my usual quarters. He was a "no-party man," one who bore a quiet, inoffensive character, and took no part in the matter one way or the other. Hoyle was an honest worthy person, and deserved well of all, but he was ill requited for his kindness and good feelings; he was robbed and murdered by a banditti, after I had surren-

1798. dered, and was in the castle of Dublin; when those who would be honest returned home, and the worst of the others became robbers and murderers of the most desperate description.

This period was to me one of great and the most irksome anxiety. I had not only to watch the movements of his Majesty's forces, in constant hunt after me, to guard against the machinations of the spy, the informer, and blood-money man, but also treason in my own camp. Every moment I was under apprehension that the villains I nominally commanded would call me to a mock trial, and take my life. I, therefore, coolly deliberated on the situation and circumstances in which I stood, and decided, if possible, to quit the kingdom. I gave directions to my wife to call an auction and sell the little remnant of my property, which had escaped destruction; it consisted of potatoes in the ground, some oats, and live stock, every other thing having been burned or destroyed. She accordingly went to Mr. Price, who lived in the neighbourhood, and the business was soon arranged in the best practicable way. I also requested my wife, now my only counsellor, if possible, to make up as much money as would

pay our passage to America, but how to accom- 1798.
plish getting on board a vessel for that purpose, I could not devise. This scheme was soon put an end to; my poor woman lived in an old dwelling called the Mill house, and the very night after she had sold the property, she was attacked by robbers, who took from her every penny of the produce, and, indeed, the very clothes from her back, as well as the ear-rings that were in my daughter's ears. They also inquired for my watch, which my wife told them she had left with me when she was with me last. They said it was false, as they had seen me since she had, and I had no watch. I have no doubt they were a gang of deserters from my camp.

When this business came to my knowledge it grieved me not a little, it was bitter news, but it might have been worse; I said, "It is my duty to submit, I am blameless in the matter, and could not prevent it."

I had settled at our last interview, to meet my wife at a given spot, but accident prevented my going.

My old associate Hacket now paid me his last visit, for the purpose of seducing more of my

1798. men to join him in robbing and plundering. I was glad to be rid of those inclined to go with him. His career was very short; he was soon after shot near Arklow, and his head fixed on a spike, on a building in the town, a just reward for his atrocious cruelties, and other misdeeds.

I had great anxiety about my son, who was at this time at Aughavanagh, the yeomanry were nearly as anxious to get him into their power as myself; although he was but about twelve years old, he would be an object with them either to put to death, or to secure as a trap for me; I, therefore, frequently removed him from place to place; and, I now determined to go and see him at all hazards. I accordingly fired my signal, and passing Knockadrew into Imail, soon arrived at Aughavanagh, where I took up my quarters at Byrne's house, and kept for my own guard John O'Neill, of the Antrim, and three deserters from the King's County militia, knowing that they would not deceive me, as their situation, if taken, would be as bad as my own. My entire force at this time was reduced to about two hundred men, including about fifty cavalry, among whom was my brother, Jonathan Holt.

I was very unwell, in addition to the dis-

tressed state of my mind. My brother endeavoured to keep up my spirits, by saying he would instantly put to death any man who should dare to insult me. He then asked me to allow him a few men to reconnoitre, lest we should be surprised, or surrounded. I gave him the men and he sallied forth. I shortly after heard a firing, and saw John O'Neill running towards me, who told me they had met a party of military with whom they had a skirmish, and my brother was in the midst of them, and he was sure I should never see him again alive. It was so; my poor brother Jonathan was killed in this affair. He also told me he saw Mr. Hume, a captain of the cavalry shot. I asked him how he was situated; he said he had left his horse and ran up the hill. I told him I did not doubt the truth of his statement, that Captain Hume was always a coward. 1798. October.

I then proceeded, with the remainder of my men, towards the place where I heard the firing. The day was wet and foggy, so much so, that we could not see ten perches before us, and found it very difficult to march forward. The firing soon ceased, and I proceeded along the foot of Lugnaquilla, a large mountain, situated

1798. October. between Glenmalure and Imail, where I fell in with the remnant of my brother's party, who confirmed the statement of my brother's death, and that of Mr. Hume.

I then got an account from John Moore, one of my cavalry, of the death of Mr. Hume, as follows:—Captain Hume was a little in advance of his corps, when Moore met him, and presented his piece at him, well knowing who he was. He cried out, "Cavalry-man, I am Captain Hume, what party do you belong to?"

Moore replied, "General Holt's; and if you put your hands to your pistols, I will blow your brains out, dismount this instant." Captain Hume then dismounted, and when on the ground Moore shot him, and another man came up and shot him through the head with a pistol.* The troops appeared in a few minutes

* Sir Richard Musgrave gives the following account of this melancholy affair:—

"The death of Captain Hume, member for the county of Wicklow, happened in the following manner; which was proved on the trial of John Moore, the rebel who killed him.

"John O'Neale swore that the party of rebels to which he belonged, was closely pursued by the King's troops, through Glenmalure into Aughavanagh, where they saw different parties of the King's troops in pursuit of them. They had

and began to fire, and my brother was killed before they retreated. 1798. October.

The loss of my brother lay heavy upon me, but when I began to think of the uncertainty of life, and the precarious situation I was myself placed in, I concluded it would be folly to give up while I had the means of resisting, and that

but six horsemen of their party, three in red, and three in coloured clothes. Captain Hume having mistaken them for a party of yeomen, advanced near them and cried out,—'Is there not enough to mind that position?' Conway, one of the rebels, asked him, 'who he was?' to which he answered, 'Captain of a corps of cavalry.' Conway then said, 'Did you ever hear of the Ballynatrochin cavalry?' and then raising his firelock missed-fire at him. On which Moore shot him, and mounted his horse, and Conway took his spurs. This gentleman," continues Musgrave, "who was universally and deservedly esteemed in this county, had displayed great courage and activity at the head of his corps, during the progress of the rebellion. This melancholy event happened in the month of October, 1798."

Lord Charlemont, in a letter to Dr. Haliday, dated 15th October, 1798, and printed in Hardy's life of that nobleman, thus alludes to the death of Captain Hume. "Even now," says his lordship, "when rebellion is frightened into its den, robbery and assassination, even in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, still keep the field and reign in its stead. The murder of Hume, the friend and favourite of his country, is a recent example of atrocity which perhaps exceeds all that went before it."

1798. October. I had better see about some mode of carrying on our defence, till an opportunity of escape offered, and if I fell, why I could not help it. I then called Colonel Doyle, and consulted him as to the last transaction, observing that there must be some informer in the neighbourhood, or so close a look-out could not be kept upon us. He agreed with me in opinion, and asked if we should continue in our present position for the night. I told him I could see we were not in a safe position, and ordered them to fix pickets and outposts, and to have a sharp look-out.

This Jocky, Byrne, at whose house I had taken up my quarters, I suspected to be an informer, and shortly after was convinced of it. He and his two sons stole several of our horses, and brought them to Dublin and sold them, and carried information to the military where I was posted.

The next morning we marched early across the mountain, between Imail and Knockadrew, where we halted.

Some of the men expressed their sorrow at my looking so unwell, but others were anxious to join the *sporting party;* in other words, the

robbing and drinking company. I heard them express their sentiments, and having called them together, I addressed them, and told them I was no longer able to be of any use to them from the bad state of my health, but I trusted I should soon recover. I then said they had had much experience of my way of manœuvring, and must have learned how to manage their own affairs and conduct themselves. Some of them shook their heads, and intimated they could not do without me. I told them I would retire to some unfrequented place, and try to save my life. 1798. October.

About fifty of them declared I should not leave them; that it was their duty to watch over and protect me, in my present weak situation, in return for the great services I had rendered to them, and the skill with which I had preserved them on so many occasions. Among these men was an Englishman of the name of Joseph Begly, who was taken prisoner about ten weeks prior to this time, and when brought to trial before me, I asked him if he was an United Irishman. He answered, "D——n my eyes if I am an Irishman at all, but an Englishman, but I will stay with you, if you will let me." I

1798. October. ordered the men to give him something to eat, and told him if he would become an United Irishman we would receive him, which he consented to do, having no desire to rejoin his regiment. He was a butcher, and was very useful to me. A division now took place among the men: forty-nine turned out to continue with me as my life-guard, the remainder went with Doyle and others. We shook hands and wished each other success. We parted for ever.

I marched with my little band through Oakwood, and halted at the widow Reilly's, in Knockalt, and remained there that night and next day, taking care to keep up our pickets, although I was aware that the smaller our number the safer we were; but the reward offered for my head was a great temptation to betray me to my enemies.

Having obtained relief from my complaint, I determined to go and visit my wife and daughter, my favourite child. I communicated the matter to my little squadron, who wanted to accompany me, but I objected to this, as I was well acquainted with the route, and could get near the place by day-light and return the same way. They agreed to any thing I wished. I

left Knockalt about one o'clock P.M., crossed the mountain in sight of the road, and then proceeded over Luggelaw, down Slievenaman, through Mullinacarrige, and soon found my wife and daughter. Mrs. Holt related the manner she had been treated by the robbers, and from their expressions, she had no doubt they were some of the men who had left me to join Hacket and the *sporters*. In the bitterness of my soul I prayed to God that I might hear of the destruction of this infernal gang. My wife recognised two of them, one of the name of Byrne, formerly a labourer in my employment, who was afterwards hanged at Wicklow. The other's name was John Delany, a foundling from the Foundling Hospital, reared by William Polland of Roundwood; he was transported to Botany Bay. I remained with my wife, talking about my misfortunes, till nearly two o'clock in the morning, when we parted. I took leave then of my dear daughter, and never saw her again until I returned from New South Wales; and I made an appointment to meet my wife, on a certain night, at Patrick Mullalley's house, near Adown. 1798. October.

I brought a boy and horse with me this night; it was near the end of October, and there was a

1798. October. smart white frost on the ground. When we reached the top of the hill, over the new mills, near Capure, I made the boy return; and having quitted the road, and shaping my course for Ballybracka Mountain, I came to the house of a widow to whom I was known; she was glad to see me, but regretted much my altered appearance and my bad health. She told me to go to bed, and assured me that her daughter should keep watch, and she would have breakfast for me in the morning. I took off my coat and lay down, but had not been more than half-an-hour in bed, before the old woman came to me in a fright, and told me that the whole country was full of the army, both horse and foot. I jumped up, put on my coat and hat, and rushing out, I perceived the infantry near enough to kill me, but they did not fire. I began to run, and they followed after me. The cavalry were in Adown; they evidently knew me, and rode as fast as they could to intercept me. My pistols were empty. I went across, under Simon Kearney's house at Ballydaniel and leaped over a stream, which made a deep ravine in the ground. In going down the hill, two of Lord Powerscourt's cavalry came within

pistol shot of me. I said to myself, "I am taken after all." I then presented my pistol at them, saying, "Stand back, or I will blow your brains out." The two yeomen, whether actuated by cowardice, or a kind feeling towards me, I cannot say, turned their horses about, and rode off, which gave me fresh courage, and I determined not to be taken till the last moment, and then to put an end to my own existence, so that they should never hang me alive. I then pushed forward, and had not proceeded more than twenty perches, when I perceived a hollow in the side of the mountain, worn out by the winter floods. It was about eight feet deep, and through it a very small stream now issued from the mountain. At this moment I believe I was out of the sight of the infantry, being on the descent of the hill, and the cavalry could not advance, from the nature of the ground. I leaped into the chasm, and followed it up about one hundred yards, to its source, which was under a large projecting stone or rock. I stooped, and to my great satisfaction, found the rock formed a cave quite large enough for me to creep into, and yet, without minute inspection, there was no external appearance of an entrance. On my hands and

1798. October.

1798. October. knees I got under the stone in the water, and found, about three yards in, that the cave was between four and five feet high, and increased apparently as I advanced, which I did eight or ten yards, when I sat myself down to wait the event.

I thought, that should I have had the good fortune to have leaped into the gullet unobserved, I had a fair chance of again escaping from the power of my enemies and an ignominious death. After I had been there about ten minutes, I heard the tramp and talk of men above me, and looking up, saw a small hole of more than a foot diameter, over my head, about three or four feet beyond the place I occupied, which enabled me to hear the conversation of my pursuers. A large tuft of heath concealed this hole on the outside. The following conversation I distinctly recollect :—

1st Soldier.—"Well, damn my eyes, but I seed him with my own eyes too, not ten perches from this place, and there is no wood here to hide 'im, he must be som'ere about here under the heather."

2d Soldier.—"This rascally rebel must deal with the very devil,—where the hell can he be gone to? this is the third time I seen him within

gun-shot, and he vanished out of sight like a spirit." 1798. October.

3d Soldier.—"Why, mon, ye cou'd na hae seen him at a'; gin ye saw him here he cou'dna' hae gane aff wi' himsel after this gait. I varily believe it is a' a lee, ye didna see the chiel ava'."

4th Soldier.—"Hould your gab, ye Scotch beggar! not less than twenty on us seed him at once, and not one hundred yards from this here place."

3d Soldier.—I dinna mean to doot your varacity, man; ye thocght ye saw the chiel, but ye micght be deceived, I guess. I'd recommend ye to keep a ceevil tongue in your tatie trap, or ye'll be apt to get my bagginet in your weisin. Wha d'ye ca' a Scots beggar?"

5th Soldier.—"Hoot, Sandy, haud yer whisht man, an' dinna be makin' a gaby o' yersel; catch the rebel, and let us hear nae mair quarrels wi' yer comrades."

It may be conceived I was not in the most comfortable state either of mind or body. I had been heated with running, and I was now in a cold wet cave sitting absolutely in the water. I feared least I should stop it, and thus be

1798. October. discovered; so putting my hand behind me, I felt a stone above the surface of the water, which flowed on each side of it. I shifted myself backwards, by resting on my hand, and thus gained a seat out of the water, which I was anxious should flow clear. The bottom was the hard rock without earth, and, consequently, I was safe in this respect.

Shortly after the noise and talking ceased. I hoped the pursuit had been given up; I ventured to climb to the top of the hole in the roof of my retreat, and I put up my head, as far as my eyes, through it, and I then saw through the tuft of heath a line of infantry soldiers standing at ease, about fifty yards from me, with their officers apparently in consultation as to what was to be done. I was safe from their view, being concealed by the heath through which I could see them. I thought it a good sign, they were evidently at fault; I looked the other way up the hill; all was clear. I blessed God for his mercifully providing me a retreat when all appeared desperate and lost. How wonderfully was this cave made the means of my safety! I thought of the prophet Jonah. God provided a great fish which saved Jonah, and the Almighty

provided a cavern visible to me but not to my enemies, as a means of refuge, safety, and escape for me. I withdrew to my place of concealment lest a farther search should take place. 1798. October.

After a short pause I again put up my head, and to my inexpressible delight, saw the troops on their march through Adown.

The excitement made me indifferent to my bodily suffering while I was in such imminent danger, but no sooner was I satisfied that I was safe, than I felt the injury inflicted on me by remaining so long in this damp, cold, and dreary, but fortunate asylum. I had been nearly two hours with my feet and legs immersed in extremely cold water; my blood, which had been heated from the exertion of running, was driven to my head, and my limbs were benumbed and powerless. I could scarcely move, but, by a violent exertion, at length I got out of the cave, but I could not walk. I then lay down on the ground, and rolled about for some time, trying in this manner to warm myself and put my blood in circulation, and after some exertion I succeeded, and in a degree recovered the use of my limbs.

I then proceeded to Simon Kearney's house,

1798. October. where his excellent wife gave me a change of clothes, bathed my feet in hot water, and made me go to bed. After some hours' sleep I felt quite recovered; she brought me dinner, and from her kind attention and good care I was soon in a state to move. My first thought now was about my poor men, whom I went in search of, and found them in Glenbride, a small village not far from the place from whence I was chased. The honest fellows were delighted to see me, and were astonished at my escape.

I had been as usual the victim of an informer. As I was going to see Mrs. Holt, I was observed by a woman named Byrne, whose husband and two sons were in gaol, and she was promised their free pardon if she could set me so that I should be taken. She immediately gave information to Lord Powerscourt, and he ordered out the troops in pursuit of me. But I again escaped in a miraculous manner. I may be laughed at for such an opinion, but it matters not; I am satisfied it was God's providential goodness which saved me, and I bless His holy name for this great mercy, and his many other interpositions in my behalf.

At my parting with Mrs. Holt, I appointed to meet her again in a certain place which I kept secret, lest I should again be brought into danger by informers. The meeting was at the house of a man named Mullalley. Previous to going there, I told my men I should be back shortly, and desired them to remain in Glenbride and be careful to keep a good look out. On my arrival at Mullalley's I found my poor miserable and fatigued wife, having walked nearly twelve miles. After some conversation, in which I related my wonderful escape, she told me she had a notion of speaking to Mrs. Latouche, to intercede with Mr. Latouche and Lord Powerscourt to interfere in my behalf, in order to save my life. I told her it would be well done; but I feared they knew nothing of me, and that they were not aware I had saved Luggelaw House from being burned.* I then observed 1798.

* "The lodge, (Luggelaw house), a neat commodious building, stands at the upper extremity of an amphitheatre, closed in, at the rear, by mountains which hang over it, as if threatening momentary destruction. In front is a lawn tastefully planted, through which a stream falling from one of the mountains winds into the lake [Tay], which, and its bordering wood and frowning mountains are seen from the lodge. In summer, scarcely a day passes without Luggelaw being

1798. that Mrs. Latouche was a good woman, and her benevolence was always sure to be exerted in behalf of those in distress. A relation of my wife was in the service of this excellent lady, and we determined to try the experiment. After a short time spent in bewailing our unhappy lot, we parted, fixing a time to meet again when she had heard Mrs. Latouche's answer.

I then returned to Glenbride to my men, and was again attacked with the complaint that I had contracted in the cave. I was scarcely able to move. I took up my quarters in the house of a man named Quin. This man said he would go to Russborough, to see how the army was situated, and inquire if there was any information given them respecting me. I thanked him, and requested him to bring me a gallon of spirits from Black Ditches on his return, which he promised to do. I gave him half a guinea I had got from my wife in the morning, to pay for it, saying it was necessary

visited by parties of pleasure, which, on presenting a ticket from any member of the La Touche family, are accommodated with beds, and receive every other attention which the lodge can afford."—*The Angling Excursions of Gregory Greendrake, Esq. in Ireland*, 1824.

to comfort the poor men these cold nights. 1798.
Quin returned about twelve at night, without the spirits, saying there was none in Black Ditches, and returning me the money I had given him. He then said, "I will go and bring home a cow, milk her for you, and boil the milk with an egg broken in it, which will be good for you; it will strengthen your heart." He went out, but did not return. I went to bed and fell asleep, and dreamed the bed was on fire about me, and in the excess of my agony of apprehension I leaped out of bed. I left the bed-room, and found nine of my men lying round a fire. I roused them up, and told them I had had a dream that foreboded no good. The men prepared themselves instantly, one of them went out and found a party of soldiers had surrounded the house, seven of whom fired at him, but all missed. I heard the shots, and I cried out, "We are sold, let us act like men, if taken we shall be hanged like dogs." Each of them examined his arms and reprimed his piece. I had a pistol in one hand, and a sword in the other. The first two men that made their way out of the house were Joseph Begly the Englishman, and James Donoghue from

1798. Waterford; they were both shot dead. I then went to the door and perceiving the white belt of the serjeant, I shot him dead, and then ran out sword in hand, leaping over the dead body of the serjeant, when a volley was fired at me: one ball took off the loop of my hat, and another the feather I wore on it, and cut it into three pieces; it hung down on my shoulder, but did not fall off. This hat had belonged to a French officer, but the Scotchmen prevented me wearing it again; the feather was hit, but the bird escaped. One of my men, Maun Macoon, ran out with me, and was wounded in the hip, but not dangerously or sufficient to stop him; two men followed us unhurt. The last two who remained in the house were brothers, named Macdonnell, one of whom was delayed looking for his blunderbuss, which one of the men had taken with him. The second serjeant approached the door, Matthew Macdonnell shot him dead, and they both rushed out and made their escape without injury. The night was very dark, and white belts and bright muskets served us for marks to fire at.

Macoon, who was wounded, kept with me; and when we got out of the enemy's power as

we thought, I examined his wound, and finding 1798.
the ball had passed through, I chewed a little tobacco, and put it to the wound, and thus staunched it so as to stop the bleeding. The poor fellow leaped up from the ground with pain from the smart of the tobacco, and notwithstanding the perilous situation we were in, I could not help laughing. We then lamented the fate of the men we had left behind us, supposing them all dead; and I feel convinced at this moment, that if I had not been alarmed by my dream, not a man of us would have escaped. Quin was the informer; he knew where our pickets were placed, and silently brought the army by another route, so that the pickets were not aware of the attack until they heard the firing. The night was so dark that when we were once out of the house the soldiers could not see us, and the flash of their guns gave us the direction to take aim at them, while we were constantly in motion.

When we were all out, the party of soldiers approached the door, and poured into the house a volley, supposing some of us might still be within. They shot Quin's sister and her child, his first cousin and servant boy. When Quin

1798. had placed the soldiers round the house, he went to Glenmacanass, thinking it impossible for me to escape, and set off to claim the reward for my apprehension; but at his return he found himself disappointed, and four of his own family victims to his avarice. The army had two serjeants and four privates killed, and seven wounded. Our loss was two killed, three wounded, and one taken prisoner.

I proceeded across the mountain to a small village called Ballymoutha, and stopped at William Brady's house, where, in about two hours after my arrival, the rest of my party joined. We returned to bury our dead, and on our march saw the troops retiring. After burying the dead, we marched to Scurlock's Leap, remained there one night, and proceeded next morning to Shankhill, taking up our quarters at Tom Donoghoe's.

Here I called my men together, and addressed them as well as I can recollect as follows:—

"My dear boys, I have been faithful to you, and have stuck to you from the beginning. I have brought you through many dangers, and while a chance of escape, and making terms remains, I am willing to stand or fall with you,

if I think it is for our mutual benefit. I cannot, 1798.
however, but see, that with our numbers so much diminished, our power is crippled and nearly destroyed. The people who would be afraid of our vengeance while we were numerous, see little to fear from us at present, and they are therefore the more ready to sell us to our enemies. We were sold by Quin; he, however, gained nothing by his bloody purpose, but had his family murdered by the soldiers. We cannot, however, shut our eyes to the circumstance that we have been betrayed twice in one short week, and I feel that it is impossible for me to remain publicly at your head for many days more in safety, either to you or to myself. The reward offered for my apprehension is a tempting one, and I fear I shall not be able to defeat the avarice of informers. My health is bad, and I am so worn out as to be incapable of exertion. I mean to go to a friend's house for a few days, and there to try and recover my health, and when it is recovered I will seek you out again. I recommend you to proceed towards Imail, and if any thing should happen to me, or if I should be taken, be assured of this, that I will not betray any one of you to save my own life. I

1798. had rather die than break the oath I have taken as a united man."

This speech was received in silence, but with looks of kind sorrow. The men now with me were the best disposed, and most honest of my party. They soon recovered a little, and asked me where I intended to go. I said I could not tell them, as it would depend on circumstances upon which I could not calculate; but I thought Imail the safest place for them to go to. We parted with full hearts: I bid them God speed, but begged them to avoid becoming robbers, and to take nothing but what was necessary for their actual subsistence.

I was now once more alone, relying on my own personal resources; and having received an invitation from a relative of mine at Dundrum, I determined to go there, although it was on the high road to Dublin. I set off, crossed Butter Mountain, Glenasmoel, and the Three Rock Mountain.* Finding myself very much fatigued, I sat down to rest on the top of a rock covered with heath, and shortly after lay down on my

* Holt calls this, in his manuscript, Three Lough Mountain, which is in the county of Wicklow, whereas he was at this period in the county of Dublin.—*Sir William Betham.*

face, and fell fast asleep. How long I slept there 1798.
I cannot say, but it could not be long, when I was alarmed by dreaming that the heath and rock on which I lay were on fire. I jumped up and ran down the hill about two or three hundred yards, and sat down again, debating in my mind whether I should proceed or return. While I was thus musing, I heard a noise, and looking up, saw Lord Powerscourt's troop of cavalry proceeding across the mountain, and shortly after they passed over the very spot on which I had been sleeping. As soon as I perceived them, I hid between two thorn clumps, which were surrounded by some high heath, and they passed quite close without observing me. I then got up, and offered my grateful acknowledgments to Almighty God for this additional proof of his providential goodness, in miraculously giving me notice of the approach of my enemies. Lord Powerscourt told me afterwards that they were looking for me at this very time, but their information was vague and unsatisfactory; indeed, I concluded no one could have been aware of my being there, and though the information was little more than a mere guess, it was nearly fatal to me. However, I escaped.

1798. I concluded now that I could not be in a worse situation by going to my friend at Dundrum than I was, and accordingly proceeded there. On my arrival I went to the rear of the house, and threw up sand against the window, the signal which had been agreed upon between us. He lifted up his window, recognised me, and admitted me instantly. He offered me refreshment, which I declined, being worn out with fatigue and want of sleep. He shewed me to my room, which I entered with great satisfaction, locked the door, took my pistols and sword, and placed them near the bed; and I determined to sell my life dearly if I should be attacked. I then went to bed and slept tolerably well.

The next morning my friend brought me breakfast early, and afterwards books to amuse me. We agreed that I should go by the name of Long. I sat near the window, from which I had a commanding view of the Dublin road, and at night I went down to the parlour, and drank punch with Mr. Wright, and a gentleman who lodged with him. I lived thus for some days, when this gentlemen went to Dublin one morning, and did not return the same evening.

I asked Wright if he thought there was any thing to be apprehended from that circumstance, but he said he was sure all was safe. I went to bed at the usual hour, and was soon asleep, and shortly after thought the house was on fire, and the bed under me. I had felt convinced what this meant twice before, and therefore proceeded to dress myself forthwith, and prepare for my departure. Wright heard the bustle, and came to inquire what was the matter. I desired him to get me a light, which he did. I then told him the army would be round his house by sun-rise in the morning. 1798.

I took leave of my friend about four o'clock in the morning, passed the iron mills by Ballally hill, to the Three Rock Mountain, [*three Lough?*] and I was not two hours out of the house before it was surrounded by a corps of cavalry; they found the nest warm, but the bird was flown. There was of course some informer in this business; but whether Wright, his servant maid, or his lodger, I never knew, but I think it was the lodger.

I now proceeded again to the Three Rock Mountain, where I sat down and ate the bread and cheese I had brought with me from Wright's

1798. in my pocket, and drank water from the spring well, on the side of the mountain, like a beast, by stooping down and drawing it into my mouth. I then proceeded across the head of Glenasmoel, keeping on the side of the mountain with a view of the glen.

I stopped at the house of a man named Morne of Monanee, and told him of my escape. He asked me if I recollected being at a house on the mountain the day I fell asleep on the rock; which I did. He said there were three men there, one of whom gave information to Lord Powerscourt, in an hour after I had left the place, who ordered out the cavalry, and searched every house in the country for me. He then said, he wondered I did not write to Lord Powerscourt, and ask him to intercede for me, and told me his lordship had expressed himself kindly towards me on parade, and said it would be a pity that I should die a shameful death; that my conduct deserved a better fate; and he added, "I think Lord Powerscourt would feel himself honoured if you surrendered to him."

I considered well what this man had said, slept little that night, and early the next morning proceeded to seek my wife, to learn the answer she had received from Mrs. Latouche.

I fortunately met her, and she told me Mrs. Latouche had said, if I would write her a letter stating that I was willing to surrender to Lord Powerscourt, she herself would go to him and try what could be done for me. My wife brought with her pen, ink, and paper. And considering there was an end of the unfortunate business I was engaged in, that my oath no longer bound me to further exertion, that I had an opportunity of getting out of the power of spies and informers, and of saving my life, without implicating that of any other person, I sat down and wrote the following letter to that most amiable and excellent lady: 1798. Nov.

"DEAR MADAM,

"God and you are my dependence, and as you are so good as to take my case into your hands, I hope it will prosper, as every thing does you undertake to perform. Let the result be to me what it may, at your request I will surrender myself to Lord Powerscourt, at his house, on any given day, and am, Madam, your

Very obedient humble servant,

JOSEPH HOLT."

"To Mrs. Latouche, Belview Delgany."

1798. Nov. When this good and humane lady received the letter, she said she would first go to Lord Meath, and procure his interest in my behalf, which he readily granted; she then proceeded to Lord Powerscourt, and shewed him my letter. His Lordship was much gratified, and with humane and generous kindness, said my life should be spared, and I should be protected from further pursuit. Mrs. Latouche then drove back with speed, and in the most kind manner sent a letter to my wife, stating the promise made by Lord Powerscourt. No tongue can express, or pen indite my feelings on receiving this intelligence; the obligations I owe to Mr. and Mrs. Latouche are above all expression; in a future part of this narrative, I shall advert to a few of them, but must now proceed to relate the events which succeeded each other so rapidly.

I would not surrender myself without first communicating to my men my intention of doing so; although that act involved me in no small danger as well as pain, but I considered myself bound to do so, and I proceeded towards them for that purpose. I found them at Brady's of Ballinalough, and I called them together; when they were assembled I said:—

"Men, and friends, any hope of our succeeding in our enterprise, is now out of the question, as you all know: the report of the French coming to our assistance is all unfounded; our situation is one of extreme distress and peril, cold, hunger, and misery is our present fate, and it is growing worse and worse every day; the approach of winter will expose you to still greater dangers, and bring you into the power of your enemies; you may individually escape by returning to your homes; but a price is set on my head, I cannot escape, hundreds are looking out for me to secure the blood money. I have therefore determined to surrender to Lord Powerscourt, and give you my last, my best advice, which is to return to your homes and employments. When I have surrendered, the patrolling of these hills by the cavalry will cease, and the traveller may pass without notice or annoyance. I have only to add, that none of you need fear that I will give information injurious to any of you; *that* part of my oath is still binding on me. I now entreat the Omnipotent God to protect and guide you all to safety and quiet, which shall be the prayer of your unfortunate but faithful commander, when 1798. Nov.

1798. Nov. he will be probably wandering over the wilds of some foreign country.—So, farewell for ever, my dear fellows, and may God bless you all!"

I then shook hands with them all one by one, while the tears stood in their eyes, and my own eyes were not dry. I felt very acutely that I could not see them all in safety before I left them.

Before I finally left them, I again addressed them. "Above all things, my dear fellows, the best, the truest, the honestest, and the most faithful of my followers, if you value your happiness in this world, or the hopes of happiness in the next, avoid Hacket and his thieving company, who will all be sooner or later brought to the gallows."

The poor fellows all kneeled down and offered up their prayers to God for my peace, happiness, and future welfare. I then bid them a last farewell, and left them. While I remained in sight, they put their hats on their firelocks, waiving them backwards and forwards to let me know that they still had their eyes upon me. Thus was I gratified by the only proofs of affection those poor fellows were able to show me.

I proceeded across the side of Ballybracka

mountain, through Kippure, and ascended Douse mountain, and so on to the corner of Lord Powerscourt's demesne wall, where I sat down, and looked about to see if any one observed me, and then I went to the house of an old friend, William Keigan; he was at home and received me cordially, and here I met my wife. My worthy host brought me some refreshment, after partaking of which, we set out together to Lord Powerscourt's, where we arrived about seven o'clock in the evening, on the 10th day of November. 1798. Nov. Nov. 10.

Mr. Keigan sent in his name, adding that I was with him. Lord Powerscourt soon made his appearance, and with great condescension taking me by the hand, welcomed me to Powerscourt, and in the pleasing and graceful manner of a perfect gentleman, conducted me up stairs to a spacious drawing-room. Shortly after I was conducted to a sumptuous repast, which was prepared for me. After dinner the cloth was removed, and the table was furnished with wines of the finest quality, and excellent spirits. Of the latter I was a good judge; of the former I knew nothing, but I take it for granted.

1798. Nov. 10. There was a friend of his Lordship's present, besides ourselves. The conversation, of course, turned to the transactions of the country for the last eight months. His Lordship asked me many questions, which I answered as he demanded of me, in a manner suitable to the requisition, having nothing to conceal, and no desire to enlarge upon any point. After some time spent in this manner, his Lordship said :— "Mr. Holt, consider yourself at home, and if you wish for any thing, only express it, and it shall be supplied."

I answered, "My Lord, I am indebted to my misfortunes for the honour I am now receiving. If it be not intruding too much on your Lordship's goodness, I would wish to be allowed one favour."

"Name it," said his Lordship, "if I can grant it, be assured it shall be done."

"Permission to give one toast," said I.

"By all means," said his Lordship, smiling, "I expected something of a much more serious character, and was prepared to grant it, if I could have done so consistently."

"Your Lordship is too good to me. All my wants are supplied in your Lordship's kind

friendship and interference in my behalf. I shall not prove ungrateful. My toast is, 'Bad luck to ——— '"* 1798. Nov. 10.

I prefaced my toast because this tiger in human shape was known to Lord Powerscourt, and was distinguished by his Lordship's notice as a "loyal man."

"With all my heart, Mr. Holt," said his Lordship, "you have no doubt good reasons for your toast."

Lord Powerscourt's friend acquiesced, and the toast was drank. My motive for giving this toast, was to turn the conversation on the cause of my joining in the rebellion, which I have already fully explained.

Lord Powerscourt then said, "We have drank your toast, Mr. Holt; you should now let us know your reasons for giving it."

I then related the circumstances of the burning of my house by Mr. ———, and the causes which drove me, most unwillingly, to take arms against my king, my country, and my faith, and join the enemies of all. I concluded, with ob-

* Here Holt named the individual mentioned at p. 14, *et seq.*, and at p. 186.

1798. Nov. 10. serving, that my being a Protestant prevented my leaving the rebels while any chance remained of their being successful.

"How is that?" demanded his Lordship, with some surprise.

I replied, "My Lord, I am a Protestant, and, I hope, a sincere one. I trust in the mercies of my God. I have been miraculously preserved on many occasions, when the interposition of Providence alone appeared able to save me. I was a loyal man, until perjury gave my personal enemy the power of burning my house, and putting myself to death. I had no alternative if I remained at home but to meet the charge of being a united man. Although innocent, my enemy was my judge. The country was under martial law. I should have been tried by a prejudiced body in a court martial,—a set of men excited strongly by the fervour and fury of the times,—men anxious to sacrifice me, to revenge an old grudge. I weighed the chances in my mind. Certain death and infamy stared me in the face, if I met the charge. The chance of escape was open to me by flying to the mountains; times might alter, and men's minds become more calm, and a cool and fair investigation might be

granted to me. I, therefore, determined to fly to the rebels. They would not receive me, if I did not take their oath of confederacy; they would do more, they would have murdered me if I even hesitated to take it; nay, even, if I did not demand to enter into their confederacy, and bind myself to be faithful by swearing allegiance. I did so. *I took the United Irishman's oath.* Having done so, I could not be freed from its obligations; *no one could absolve* ME. I, therefore, kept it faithfully, and must, and will keep it, at least those parts of it which are still binding upon me. The poor wretches who are still in the mountains, are standing out for their lives; they would be glad to return to their allegiance to their king and country; they have now no political object. Before I left them I recommended them to return to their homes and occupations, and I hope they will be permitted to do so. With respect to the banditti, who are robbing for thieving sake, nothing will cure them but the severities of the law. My Lord, I was an unwilling rebel; a traitor in spite of my own wishes. Had I not been a rebel, I should now have been a corpse, rotting in a grave, if they had condescended to grant me so great a favour. 1798. Nov. 10.

1798. Nov. 10. Perhaps, and very likely, the mouth which now has the honour of addressing your Lordship, would have been grinning horribly on a spike, over the gaol at Wicklow, or some other public place. It appears shocking, but as the alternative was, I chose the better course."

His Lordship shook his head, but made me no answer. He seemed, however, to feel the force of the observations I had made, and looked serious, and I thought sorrowful. He then said,—

"What do you think would have been your fate if you had been taken?"

"My Lord," said I, emphatically, "that I think could never have happened; while I had life I would have fought, and if I had not been slain by my enemies, and that I found all hope of escape gone, I would have killed myself."

His Lordship then turned to Mr. Canning,* and said, "Did I not tell you Holt would never be taken alive." Then turning to me, Lord Powerscourt, continued,—

"Mr. Holt, if I had met with you the other day, would you have fired at me?"

* Afterwards the Right Hon. George Canning.

"Undoubtedly, my Lord, if any man fired at me, with intent to kill, I should surely have returned the compliment; but had I taken you prisoner, not a hair of your head should have been injured. I would, however, have had ten men's liberty for your Lordship's ransom." 1798. Nov. 10.

Lord Powerscourt said, "That is all fair. Well, Holt, now what do you think of my cavalry?"

J. H.—"I think them great fellows entirely."

Lord Powerscourt.—"What do you mean?"

J. H.—"Clean, well-mounted, good looking soldiers enough, who can ride, and talk, and eat, drink and swagger, and look as much like real soldiers as need be desired."

Lord Powerscourt.—"You do not mean to say that they won't fight, I hope?"

J. H.—"They appear, my Lord, a harmless set. If they know how to fight, I am not able to say so. I have often met them, but never saw any mischievous disposition in them, or desire to hurt any body, *if they were in danger themselves;* but they know well how to *run.* I have seen very numerous examples of their velocity; and if I was their doctor, and any of them had been wounded, I know this, that the

1798. Nov. 10. first place I should have examined for the wound, would have been the back. A few days since I met two of them alone, and presented my pistol at them, threatening to blow their brains out if they advanced one step. They very civilly saved me the trouble of doing so, if it had happened that my pistol was primed and loaded, by wheeling their horses to the right about, and galloping off as fast as they could. They were well mounted and armed, while I was alone, and my enemies in full chase of me."*

Lord Powerscourt.—"It would be a pity to take a man's life for going to see his wife and children. At all events, Mr. Holt, I am heartily rejoiced that you are now out of the reach of spies and informers, and your life safe. You have had many wonderful escapes, as you say, and believe, I doubt not, by Providential interference; and they certainly look very like Providential acts, as a recompense for your humanity, whenever you had the power of exercising that admirable quality in a commander."

J. H.—"My Lord, I am indebted to your Lordship's humanity, under God, for the safety

* See pp. 258, 259.

I now enjoy. Your Lordship's character has gained a victory over me, which 10,000 of his Majesty's troops, who surrounded me in Glenmalure, were unable to achieve; they could not take a single prisoner, or kill a single man, but sustained a considerable loss. I baffled all their manœuvres, and brought off my 780 men in safety." 1798. Nov. 10.

His Lordship seemed gratified with these observations, and requested me to relate the circumstances of that affair, which I did, as before told in this narrative.

Lord Powerscourt.—"Holt, it is a pity you were not in some corps of cavalry."

J. H.—"My Lord, I think it is better as it is."

Lord Powerscourt.—"Why?"

J. H.—"I should have been too wicked and persevering; and my officers might have been less inclined to exertion than myself, or might have blundered in command, which would have vexed me, and I should probably have been shot, for mutinous disrespect to such officer, or piked; many a fine fellow have I seen fall these last eight months.

"Had my pistols been charged that day, you

1798. Nov. 10. would have been short of a man the next morning on parade; I seldom threw away a cartridge."

Lord Powerscourt.—"Do you know those men?"

J. H.—"No, my Lord, but if I did I would not mention their names; their motives might have been kindness to me, and possibly they did not wish to take my life."

Mr. Canning, the gentleman who was with us at the table, observed, "Mr. Holt, you make little of my Lord Powerscourt's corps. You seem to hold them in great contempt."

"Yes, Sir," said I, "I hold them rather cheap;—I deprived them of many comfortable nights' sleep, and made them very uneasy on all occasions; and I drew blood from them once or twice. I think, therefore, when they had me in view, they should have run me closer, and not allowed me to get to earth as they did; a single man with a pistol or two in his hands, supposing them charged, would not have stopped me in the chace,—I know that."

The gentleman said that he was certain it was now twelve o'clock at night; and finding myself fatigued and unable comfortably to drink any more, I intimated to Lord Powerscourt a

desire to retire to bed, and Mr. Canning wished 1798.
me good night. I was instantly conducted to an apartment sumptuous and commodious. As I was satisfied Lord Powerscourt was a good soldier, whatever I thought of his men, I gave myself no uneasiness about placing pickets, and had no apprehension of being surprised. I went to bed and slept soundly until the morning; no dreams of fire surprised or alarmed me.

I arose early, cleaned myself, and proceed- Nov. 11.
ing from my room, I met Lord Powerscourt and Mr. Canning on the staircase: they said, "Good morning, Mr. Holt," and they conducted me to the breakfast parlour.

Lord Powerscourt.—"I hope, Mr. Holt, you slept well."

J. H.—"Indeed, my Lord, I have; relying on your Lordship, I surrendered without terms, but I trust my life is safe; that was, I think, implied; feeling your lordship's high character, I did not think it necessary to stipulate what I thought must be implied. If not, I had better have perished in the field."

Lord Powerscourt.—"Mr. Holt, my word of honor is pledged for your safety; you have paid me the compliment of surrendering yourself and

1798. Nov. 11. sword into my hands, and I will lose my own life sooner than yours should be taken."

J. H.—"Had I not the highest confidence in your lordship's honour, and entertained the greatest respect for your character, I would not have been your guest at Powerscourt. I had an overture from that gallant and humane officer, General Moore, but I could not avail myself of his kindness."

While we were talking, one of Lord Powerscourt's cavalry, by name Buckly, came in, and addressed me in a sneering and insulting manner:

"You are welcome, *General* Holt," said he.

I looked at him, and measured him with my eye from head to foot, and smiling said—

"I am very sorry I have not my muster-roll or papers about me, that I might be able to address you by your proper title and rank in my army. You know, Buckly, you were a United Irishman long before I was driven from my home, and my house burned. Do not now give yourself airs, my good fellow; your convenient conscience enabled you to swear on both sides. You came here to mock me, supposing me a miserable captive, but I would not

change situations with you, if I had to take your conscience also. I was driven into rebellion to save my life, and having taken one oath, felt myself bound to keep it. You entered into the conspiracy without compulsion, of your own free will, and like a perjurer have sworn cat and pan.* You cannot deny it; you have not only sworn on both sides, but acted on both sides; a fellow with a glass jacket should not commence throwing stones. I knew you to be a rascal, and would not trust you, so you tendered your services to his Lordship." 1798. Nov. 11.

He was dumb, and retired without even attempting to reply, on which Lord Powerscourt came up to me, and taking me by the hand, observed that he rejoiced much that I had said what I did; but observed, he had always considered Buckly a loyal man.

J. H.—"Do you know, my Lord, how many such *loyal men* you have in your corps?"

Lord Powerscourt.—"I do not, Holt. How many are there?"

J. H.—"My Lord, they are your own tenants; the period of rebellion is, I trust, nearly over,

* This appears a favourite expression with Holt, see page 169.

1798. Nov. 11. and when I am far away, they will still be your tenants. I know how many loyal and untainted men you have, and you have a few, but some are sworn on both sides; they will, I trust, repent, and I hope be forgiven. I cannot say any thing more on the subject, you must excuse me."

Breakfast was now announced, and Mrs. Holt coming in at the same time, was shown into the room to me, and we breakfasted together. It was the happiest moment we had enjoyed since we were driven from our own dear, humble, happy fireside. Few persons know how to estimate the value of peace, quietude, and security, but those who have been deprived of those blessings. My countrymen, if they be wise, will look to it; nothing is to be had by rebellion for the poor, but hard knocks, misery, and death.

His lordship now came in, and with that generous consideration for my feelings which was so remarkable in his whole conduct, asked which way I would prefer going to the castle, on horseback or in a carriage. I answered—

"My Lord, I have already been too much a spectacle for the contemplation of the public;

I would not wish to make a display, and would prefer going in a carriage." 1798. Nov. 11.

Lord Powerscourt.—"How many men shall I order to attend you?"

J. H.—"As many as you please, my Lord, but none are necessary; your Lordship's valet is sufficient, I have no desire to escape, nor would I if I could; and as to a rescue, that is out of the question, nothing of the kind is to be apprehended."

Twenty-four of Lord Powerscourt's cavalry were ordered out as an escort. I got into the carriage at eleven o'clock in the morning of the 11th of November, 1798. We passed on rapidly by Enniskerry, Golden Ball, Dundrum, Miltown, by Stephen's Green, down Grafton-street, and Dame-street, to the Castle of Dublin; the carriage stopped in the upper Castle-yard, opposite the secretary's office. There was so great a crowd, that I apprehended some of them would be smothered. I closely observed the expressions on the faces of the spectators, which were very much varied, some evidently regretted my fate, while others exulted in my fallen state. They appeared to me to be all praying either for my good or evil. As an observer of mankind,

1798. Nov. 11. I saw much character in the assembled multitude; I put my head out of the carriage window, and said, "Feast your eyes, and make the most of your time, you will soon lose sight of the curious subject of your contemplation." I then pulled up the blind, and they lost sight of me altogether.

I was dressed as follows:—A round common hat, scarlet jacket, faced with green, gold epaulets, white kerseymere vest, and grey pantaloons. My face and heart were well provided with resolution. When I raised the blinds, I heard expressions of various and opposite import, but I cared little for any observations; my confidence was in the Almighty, who had on so many occasions supported and protected me, and he did so at this trying moment.*

* "At length the rebel hero of the mountains; the man who has so often died in so many kinds of ways on paper; who was so often taken; who was so often wounded; and who, like Othello, has had so many hair-breadth 'scapes; the celebrated General Holt has at length surrendered to Lord Powerscourt. He was escorted to town in a coach, by a formidable troop of his Lordship's cavalry. The multitudes who followed him through the streets were very great, and he frequently seemed to address them from the windows very politely. When the coach came to the Castle-yard, few were permitted to enter by the guards. Holt seems to be about

Lord Powerscourt now came and expressed some surprise at the blinds being up. He opened the carriage door, and taking hold of my left arm, we walked together into the secretary's office. He then introduced me to Mr. Marsden, the secretary to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant. I was then given some refreshment, and soon after Lord Powerscourt took his leave, promising to come and see me again. Shortly after Major Sirr came in, attended by James O'Bryan, commonly called "Honest Jemmy," who conducted me to the apartment of Arthur O'Connor, in the Prison Tower. The major left me with O'Bryan, who made himself very busy endeavouring to obtain some confession, and information from me, but finding himself disappointed, he looked as pleasant as a lawyer with a long brief and a small fee. 1798. Nov. 11.

forty years of age; has a smartness in his aspect which approaches almost to ferocity; he seemed perfectly at his ease, and in very good health; wore a scarlet coat faced with blue, and had the general aspect of a military man, who went through much fatigue in the field. What the terms are on which this man has surrendered is not generally known, but they are supposed to be transportation for life."—*Courier Newspaper, 19th November*, 1798.

1798. Nov. 11. About four o'clock dinner was announced; it was brought from the Castle Tavern, kept by a man named Watkins; the allowance was two dishes at the prisoner's choice, a bottle of port wine, and two bottles of porter. I asked O'Bryan to get me some spirits to make a jug of punch, and I gave him money for the purpose. He brought me a pint of spirits, and some sugar, with which and the wine, and hot water, I made very good punch. When O'Bryan thought the punch had softened my head, he again commenced his operations to obtain information respecting those who were implicated in the rebellion, and asked me many questions. I got vexed at last, and answered him so sharply, that he ceased his importunity for the evening. I told him, as it was midnight, that it was time to retire, and desired my bed might be prepared. He introduced with all due ceremony Mrs. O'Bryan, to "General Holt;" she prepared my bed, and after they had departed, I turned in for the night.

Nov. 12. Next morning, the 12th November, O'Bryan came to me, and I desired him to send me a hairdresser to shave me and dress my hair. About half-past twelve I had many visitors, who

asked me various questions; such as were civil and proper I answered with a like spirit, but I was firmly resolved never to violate my oath. So to all leading questions I was silent. 1798. Nov. 12.

Many an anxious and aching heart was now beating with apprehension, and fear inexpressible, lest I should give information against them. Some of my old friends quitted their homes and kept out of the way, but finding there was no look-out for them, their fears were dispelled, and they soon felt satisfied that I would not basely purchase safety by sacrificing others, to whom I was bound by the sacred obligation of an oath. I am at this moment gratified and delighted with the reflection, that I have never deprived a wife of her husband, or a child of its father, by giving information; and I feel certain, therefore, that in return, safety and happiness have been graciously vouchsafed to me by my Redeemer, in shielding me through so many dangers.

> For poison, less than falsehood, fear
> Rather than purchase life so dear,
> We should embrace cold death,
> Than lose our country's love at our departing breath.

On the 14th of November, Mrs. Holt came Nov. 14.

1798. to see me, and was ushered in by James O'Bryan.
Nov. 14. She gave him a guinea to buy a bottle of spirits, as she knew the state of affliction my mind was in, on account of our poor children, and she hoped it would give me at least momentary consolation. It was a dear purchase, for O'Bryan kept the change, which aggravated her not a little, but I endeavoured to console her, saying, with God's help, we should surmount all our grievances. She then left me and went to the country. She returned in a few days; and about midnight O'Bryan came and said that Mrs. Holt must leave me, as he had orders not to let her remain all night with me. I remonstrated with him, and told him he ought to have informed me of this before; that twelve o'clock at night was a very improper hour to turn any woman into the streets, and especially my wife, and in short, that she should not leave me except by force. I then ordered him to withdraw, and as soon as he was out of the room, I locked the door, and we went to bed, when we held a curtain council. Mrs. Holt very much regretted being separated from me, and I desired her to go to Lord Powerscourt, with my respects, and inform him how I was treated. His Lordship

instantly wrote to the secretary; of the contents of his letter I am ignorant, but I was told that Mrs. Holt was to be allowed to remain with me in future, and that I might see any friend I wished; and Jemmy O'Bryan became very humble and polite, saying, *he* would allow Mrs. Holt to be with me. I listened to him in silence, and when he had finished his speech, I told him, in future, never to come into the room unless he was called, or that he had a message to deliver to me, and then to rap at the door, and not to presume to come in with his hat on, which the fellow did at first. He looked at me with astonishment, but, I added sternly, "Fellow, be gone!" He shut the door, and never after this assumed any authoritative airs. 1798. Nov. 14.

Next day my dinner was sent in, consisting of a neck of mutton, with half-boiled cabbage, and a steak from a shin of beef, which was a most disgusting exhibition of dirt. Knowing what was liberally allowed to State prisoners, I rang the bell, and when O'Bryan appeared, I shewed him the dinner: he smiled, and said it was Watkins' fault—that Watkins was not particular. I desired him to get me a fowl, giving him five shillings. Major Sirr paid me a visit Nov. 15.

1798. Nov. 15. the next day, and asked me if I had any cause of complaint. I shewed him the dinner which had been sent in to me, and which, after breaking one of the dishes, I had put by in a cupboard for the purpose. He was much displeased at the way in which I had been treated, and told me what I was entitled to demand, and if two such dishes as I chose were not supplied properly to me, to complain to him and it should be remedied. After this I had no reason to complain of the treatment I received.

Mrs. O'Bryan one morning was about to carry off the remains of my dinner of the previous day, but I stopped her, and asked her what she was about? She said that she always had the broken victuals of the State prisoners. I told her my habit was to give the broken meat to the poor, and that I should continue to do so. She disappeared, and looking out, I saw a poor woman picking cinders under my window; I dropped the remains of the shoulder of mutton and a loaf of bread into her apron, for which she prayed for a thousand blessings upon me, and I had the same poor creature watching for my bounty every morning while I remained in the Tower.

On the 16th I had a visit from his Excellency the Marquis Cornwallis, the Lord Lieutenant, accompanied by his aides-de-camp and other military gentlemen. They asked me many questions about the skirmishes in the rebellion; my answers to which seemed much to amuse them. They never asked me an objectionable question—they were gentlemen. His Excellency hoped that I had been properly treated, to which I answered that I had some reason to complain of James O'Bryan and Watkins, but that I would not trouble his Excellency with such trifles, as my complaints had already been remedied by the humanity of Major Sirr. He said he was glad to see me look so well after so much exertion and fatigue, for that he knew well what campaigning was in an intricate and mountainous country. Adding, 1798. Nov. 16.

"Have you ever had any military education, Mr. Holt?"

"My Lord," said I, "I was in Captain Bryan's corp of Arklow volunteers when very young, and there probably imbibed a martial disposition; but I know little about military matters. I generally, after a little deliberation, acted at the moment, as the circumstances I was placed

1798. Nov. 16. in seemed to dictate; when I had time for deliberation, I weighed all the circumstances, and acted on a settled plan of operations, which most commonly proved successful."

His Excellency replied, "We have had in the mountains abundance of proof of your superior skill and determined character."

J. H.—"It behoved me to use my best endeavours, my Lord. I determined not to lose my life in a dastardly manner, or to throw it away like a thoughtless fool. I was driven into rebellion by oppression, my house was burned, and I should have been murdered had I remained; I therefore became a rebel, not because I liked it, but because I could not help it; I put my life in jeopardy to avoid immediate death. I preferred the chance of death by a bullet to the death of a brute."

His Excellency and his suite smiled, and retired, wishing me good morning in a very kind and friendly manner. The Marquis was a stout athletic old man, with a benevolent countenance, about five feet ten inches high, pale face, and a cast in one of his eyes. He was a man of very pleasing address; and any one would at once say he was a nobleman, and yet his manners

were so affable and condescending, that even the humblest person felt relieved from all embarrassment. I could not but contrast his conduct and bearing to me with that of some others whose visits became irksome, by impertinent, silly, vexatious, and often subtle and invidious inquiries. 1798. Nov. 16.

Shortly after, a company was announced to me by Jemmy O'Bryan; their appearance was very respectable, but their conduct disgusted me extremely, for they asked me many improper questions. At last I stopped one of those impertinent fellows, by saying, "Sir, I shall be glad to be informed by what authority you are come here to examine me, or even to see me, I never had any acquaintance with you—why have you come here?" He answered, that he certainly never had known me. On which I observed, "It is my particular wish then, that we should remain unacquainted, and I request you, with your company, will forthwith take your departure." He affected to be offended, and muttered something, on which I rang the bell, and when O'Bryan made his appearance, I desired him to shew the company out, and not to allow a promiscuous rabble to be admitted, for that I

1798. would not be made a show of, and if he allowed any one to enter without apprising me, I would have him punished." I have no doubt that "honest Jemmy" thought to make a penny by showing me at so much a-head, as a showman would with a wild beast; and he would have succeeded, had I not put a stop to it at once.

Notwithstanding the rebuffs Jemmy had received, his hankering after the filthy lucre often influenced him to try his hand, to obtain my permission for gentlemen to speak with me. Sometimes I peremptorily refused; at others I said, "Let them come in," and when admitted, I commenced asking them questions, so wide of the object of their visit, and in many cases so enigmatical, as puzzled them exceedingly; indeed, well they might, for my questions mostly had no meaning. Thus Jemmy's friends got little for their money, beyond seeing the wonderful man of the mountains and glens; they carried no information away with them, but the recollection of a few nonsensical questions, which might confuse them but could not inform them.

A few days after, two of Jemmy's sisters came to see him from Ballynakill; the elder was married, the younger single. This latter dam-

sel was anxious to favour me with her company as much as possible, and to stop in my room in Jemmy's absence. The elder lady's business was to obtain a pardon for her brother, John, a deserter from the royal artillery, who had joined me at the Whelp Rock, from Edenderry, and continued with me until our disasters on the Boyne. At this time he was hiding in Dublin. Though amiable Jemmy would have taken him for the sake of the reward, his sister obtained his pardon; and Jemmy, anxious to make something of him, enlisted him in his own diabolical employment of obtaining confidence in order to betray it. While with me, John O'Bryan was an active useful fellow. That he might be a better lure, he now put on the disguise of a sailor, and frequented the low public houses, got wretched drunken creatures to utter treasonable words, and then, with Jemmy's assistance, he soon lodged them in limbo, and they were generally punished upon the testimony of these two birds of prey.* 1798.

* "The spy and informer have always found encouragement in the bloody annals of Ireland's distress; but in the present period there was a systematic arrangement of villany and fraud, which gave importance to the situation of those

1798. Both these wretches were of the lowest of the low, both entered early into the United Irishmen's conspiracy, both swore allegiance to be

detestable monsters; and by identifying them in some degree with the government of the day, raised them to a rank and importance in the political scale, in proportion to the sanguinary duties, which none but the most infamous and abandoned could be found to perform. Hence the life of the most respectable individual was not a moment secure, when personal resentment or political intrigue had marked him the victim of suspicion or revenge.

"These hired monsters and traffickers in human blood, lived under the countenance and protection of power, and assumed an authority and importance which was but too often and too fatally felt. Depraved by nature, and familiarised to the most appalling scenes of distress, they sinned with impunity against every law human and divine, and were regarded with that horror by their fellow-men, which, were it possible to form the idea, the virtuous soul might be supposed to feel, should it come in contact with the damned. Those reckless ruffians, who rioted on the unhallowed hire of perjury and blood, fabricated plots, feigned conspiracies, and in the hour of Ireland's distress, perpetrated more misery than was even inflicted by the sword. Families were made desolate, and whole districts laid waste, while the informer and the executioner walked hand in hand; and from the infamous testimony of the most depraved and abandoned of men, virtue and innocence found no appeal."—*Teeling's Personal Narrative of the Irish Rebellion of* 1798.

The eloquence of Curran, thus individually denounced O'Bryan:—"Have you any doubt that it is the object of

loyal, both broke all their oaths, and probably every other they had taken; both became informers against those to whom they had volun- 1798.

Bryan to take down the prisoner for the reward that follows? Have you not seen with what more than instinctive keenness this blood-hound has pursued his victim? how he has kept him in view from place to place, until he hunts him through the avenues of the court, to where the unhappy man stands now, hopeless of all succour but that which your verdict shall afford? I have heard of assassination by sword, by pistol, and by dagger; but here is a wretch, who would dip the Evangelists in blood—if he thinks he has not sworn his victim to death, he is ready to swear, without mercy and without end; but oh! do not, I conjure you, suffer him to take an oath; the arm of the murderer should not pollute the purity of the gospel; if he will swear, let it be on the knife, the proper symbol of his profession."

In the popular songs of this unhappy period, O'Bryan is held up to execration under the soubriquet of

JEM STAG.*

TUNE—"*Ben Bowsprit of Wapping.*"

"Jem Stag is my name, I'm the Major's own boy,
Swear away, swear away, so steady;
My pastime of late is with lives for to toy,
For that sport, Sirr, I always am ready.

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* "A stag is a king's evidence, one not true to the gang." See "*A Collection of Constitutional Songs*," printed by A. Edwards, Cork, 1799.

1798. tarily sworn to be faithful, in the hope of obtaining elevated stations, which Jemmy obtained at last, and after which, he was in a state to

I will swear white is black, day is night, and all such,
For to hang and transport each reformer;
And my reasons for this are 500 — not much;
Swear away, swear away, right or wrong—I say,
What do you think of Jem Stag the informer?

"My grandfather chanced for to die by 'the drop,'
Swear away, swear away, so swingingly,
One day dad was choaked in the very same shop
That was kept there above by M'Kinly;
My trull's saucy name, it was shop-lifting Nan,
She for Botany sailed with Peg Horner;
And the family pride I'll keep up while I can,
Swear away, swear away, right or wrong—I say,
What do you think of Jem Stag the informer?

"I pray you don't think that I'd blush at a lie,
Swear away, swear away, so handsome;
If M'Nally or Curran should make me look shy,
Don't you know that his X has my ransome.
And if gentlemen should dare to question my trade,
In the Tower I'd give them a corner;
From that treacherous green cloth through the streets I parade,
Then cut away, burn away, hang away—I say,
What do you think of Jem Stag the informer?"

After what is stated in the text, perhaps it is unnecessary to add that O'Bryan was hanged for murder, an event which

disregard all matters and influence in this world. 1798.
Perjury, robbery, and murder, seldom escape their due retribution; Jemmy had his reward, and if I am not very much mistaken in his character, no man deserved it more. One morning early, I heard Jemmy's tap at my door, and on his coming in, he told me Major Sirr

was hailed by an effusion entitled, "Jemmy O'Bryan's Minuet as performed at de Sheriff's ridotto, No. 1, Green Street," to the tune of "De night before Larry was stretch'd."

"Oh! de night before Jemmy was stretch'd,
De spies de all ped him a visit,
And swore, now de Coleman was ketch'd
'Twas in vain any longer to quiz it;
His crimes and his murders found out,
Convicted and cast was the bully,
And de lad dat so many did out,
Must at last be tuck'd up to de pulley,
Bekays he was doom'd to de gad."

"Ah, boys, never depend upon de castle! Be de hokey, I swore as much on de holy Evangelists in de sweet cause of loyalty as would blister a griddle, [*a plate of iron on which cakes are baked*] and till dere was a crust upon my soul a fut tick," [*foot thick*] &c.

This will be sufficient to exhibit the ferocious and brutal spirit of the time, nor would I have ventured to make even this short quotation at the risk of disgusting the reader, did I not feel that, as editor of these Memoirs, it was my duty to collect contemporary opinions and documents, and to illustrate the statements of Holt, from such sources.

1798. wished to see me in the lower room, I walked down, and was surprised to see the Major in conversation with John O'Neill of Redwells, in the county of Kildare. The Major addressed me—

"Mr. Holt, do you know this man?"

J. H.—"His appearance brings to my recollection that I have seen him before."

Major Sirr.—"Can you say that this man is John O'Neill?"

J. H.—"I do not pretend to know his name, but I have seen him before."

Major Sirr—addressing O'Neill. "You—you know this gentleman?"

O'Neill.—"O yes, that is General Holt."

At this moment young Pilsworth came in, whose life I had saved, as is before minutely specified in this my history,* when he was brought a prisoner before me by this same John O'Neill. Pilsworth seemed surprised, but immediately related the circumstances under which he had been taken and plundered by O'Neill, that I had saved his life, protected him from O'Neill's savage cruelty, and had passed him in safety to Dublin.

* See pp. 61, 62, 63. 68, and Note on p. 69.

Major Sirr.—"Are you ready, Mr. Pilsworth, 1798.
to prove what you have now stated?"

Pilsworth.—"Indeed, I am; I can never be sufficiently grateful to General Holt; I owe him my life; he saved me from a cruel and torturing death, which that ferocious man was anxious to inflict after robbing me."

I now retired to my apartment, leaving the major with Pilsworth and O'Neill. O'Bryan told me it was in O'Neill's power to save his life, and that he was about to do so, but I know nothing more on this subject.

Gentle reader, I cannot help remarking that I have observed many individuals, who possess a faithful and virtuous heart, liable to be visited by misfortunes and distress; while such fellows as John O'Neill, and the O'Bryans, murderers and informers in copartnership, were living in the possession of plenty; but the reign of iniquity is short, and punishment is eventually certain.

I now composed the following lines:

I'm destined now to go away
Unto the land of Botany Bay.
And, filled with joy, which should be tears,
But so many O'Bryan's now appears

1798. Which makes my mind quite a contrast;
When I reflect on what is passed.
May the Deity direct our way,
That from that path we never stray,
Which leads to the brilliant place of rest,
Where contrite souls are for ever blest.

The next morning, walking in my room, I heard a great bustle and noise outside. I stepped to the door, and heard O'Bryan say, "I can take any man I please." On further inquiry, I learned that a countryman who was passing by, asked if Holt was a prisoner there? O'Bryan, who saw or wished to see treason in every word and every thing, seized the poor man as an accomplice of mine. In vain did the poor fellow declare that he had "no call to me." Jemmy said, "Go up stairs, or while this stick remains whole, I will lay it on you," and he suited the act to the word. The aggrieved creature was driven up in my sight by O'Bryan; I observed him sharply as he passed, and I thought I had some knowledge of him.

The following day, O'Bryan asked me if I knew any of the Farringtons from the neighbourhood of Talbots town, and I answered I did recollect people of the name in the county of Wicklow, "but I have certainly seen the man

you were beating yesterday; I saw his face as 1798.
he passed me."

"If you let him come to your apartments it may serve you," said O'Bryan.

I replied, "I do not see how that can be, but he may come." O'Bryan ushered him in, and after a few words passed, I recollected him. His brother was in the Dunlaven cavalry, and deserted to me, bringing with him a very fine entire horse he called *Lillicks*. I had no desire to have company with me, so I desired O'Bryan to remove him, which he did, keeping him confined five days without letting any one know that he had such a man in custody. At length the man, by my advice, agreed to give O'Bryan five guineas, which sum was demanded for his liberation. He wrote to the innkeeper where his horses and cars were, and where he had lodged the money for which he had sold a load of barley; the innkeeper sent him the sum required, which Jemmy pocketed, and set him at liberty. I had advised the man as soon as he was liberated, to go to a magistrate and lodge an information against O'Bryan; but it was of no use, Jemmy had it all his own way until he murdered Mr. Hoey.

1798. A few nights after, Jemmy met an acquaintance of mine, named Martin Byrne, at Watkins' tavern, and in order to exasperate him, shot his spaniel dog. This man lived at 45, Ormond Market, and was a respectable tradesman, and had been deputy alnager in the county of Wicklow. Byrne, irritated by the killing of his favourite dog, called O'Bryan names, on which the other procured help, and dragged him to the Tower where I was confined. I had permission that my door should stand open, and when Byrne was brought in, hearing a noise, I went forward and found him in O'Bryan's custody. I knew Byrne well; we had travelled together some thousand miles collecting his Majesty's dues as alnagers, and his voice was familiar to me. Believing that Byrne had nothing whatever to do with the rebellion, I was much surprised to see him in custody, and asked him the cause. "Mr. Holt," said he, "this villain has made me a prisoner, because I called him to account for shooting my dog." I produced some wine and spirits, and offered Mr. Byrne a glass, which he drank with me; he afterwards commenced legal proceedings against O'Bryan, but I do not know

how the matter ended. Thus were the most illegal acts committed with impunity. I have often heard Jemmy O'Bryan pitied, but I believe in my conscience he well deserved what he got. 1798.

A few nights afterward, about 12 o'clock, a fire broke out in a building adjoining the Ordnance store, which much alarmed the inhabitants of the neighbourhood: the prisoners in the Tower were permitted to go to the top to see it. Jemmy O'Bryan accompanied them. He came up to me and said, "Little fear of your letting Government know of this."

I replied, "It is impossible to discover a thing I know nothing of."

He said, "John O'Neill knew and discovered."

My answer was, "The greatest rogues know most."

The drums beat to arms, the trumpets sounded, and artillery were stationed in many parts of the city; the engines being well supplied with water, and worked admirably, the fire was soon extinguished, and we all retired to our quarters. Next morning Mrs. Holt went to the county of Wicklow to see her children.

1798. It was now announced to me that his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant was coming to see me again, and he shortly afterwards made his appearance, accompanied by Lords Rossmore, Monck, and Powerscourt, the Rev. Thomas Brownrigg, and a person I did not know. This man said he came a long journey to ask me a question, which he hoped I would answer truly, it was,—"Who burned Lady Francis's house?"

His Excellency, the Lord Lieutenant, most graciously said, "Mr. Holt, it is at your own discretion to answer the question or not, and in such a manner as you please."

On which I turned to the stranger and said, "Sir, I hope you know the road you came?"

He answered, "I do."

"Then," said I, "there is no fear of your losing your way on your return, my name is Twyford, I know nothing of the matter."* The stranger seemed displeased, but I was gratified that my answer seemed to give offence to no one else.

His Excellency was very gracious and kind, and inquired after my health. I answered,

* There is an evident point here, but I am unable to explain or illustrate it.

"My Lord, my health, thank God, is good, but my mind is *anxiated*." 1798.

"On what account Mr. Holt?" said his Excellency.

"My Lord, I am reduced from an honourable title, rank, and commission, to my original insignificance, and although I feel that I have been guilty neither of cowardice or neglect of duty, it is not likely I shall have a fair trial."

His Excellency laughed, and turning to Lord Rossmore said something. I then said, "I hoped his Excellency would not be displeased at my freedom in presuming to give a jocular answer, for the kind urbanity of his manner made me presume too much." He instantly stopped me and said, "Holt, I am not at all offended, and I assure you I shall be glad to render you service. I have a good opinion of you." Putting myself in a position of thankful submission, fixing both my hands together, and bowing my head, I said, "My Lord, that is the most consoling gratification which can be offered to an unfortunate man; may God reward your Excellency! I need no other interest; I feel I shall be generously and humanely treated, and the only favour I shall entreat of your Excel-

1798. lency is that my wife and children may be allowed to accompany me in my exile. To be deprived of their company in my declining years would be a blow I fear too severe for me to recover. It is all that I shall ask."

His Excellency replied, "Yes, Holt, your request shall be granted, and it shall be put on the face of the books* this day, and I am sorry that I cannot send them at the Government expense."

He then, turning to Lord Rossmore, said something to him in a low voice, which I did not catch the exact import of, but I think he said, "What an interesting man this is."

I returned his Excellency my most humble and grateful thanks for his great condescension and kindness, and added, that though his Majesty's soldiers had robbed me, had burned and destroyed all my property, I did not doubt but the Almighty, who had been so bountiful to me, in mercy would raise me up some friend in my necessity, who would pay the passage of my wife and children; and so it happened, that excellent woman,—that paragon of all women, Mrs.

* The Lord Lieutenant's expression was probably "it shall be put on the minute book this day."

Latouche, did this for me. May God bless her for it!* 1798.

This conversation interested most, if not all, of the party in my behalf, and they all seemed to feel compassion for my unhappy situation. The Rev. Mr. Brownrigg stepping forward, addressed me in the following words, as nearly as I can recollect them. "Holt, will you lay your hand to your heart, and declare yourself, as I know you once were, a loyal man, and a faithful subject? If you do, you shall be a captain of a corps of horse, and go through the country taking up all the men and arms you can find. From your knowledge, you can render more important services to government than any other person, and you need not leave your own country. Moreover, should you fall during your exertions, a handsome provision shall be made for your wife and family."

I answered, "Sir, I am very grateful, truly grateful, for your offer, which I am sure, is well

* "Mrs. Peter Latouche, who interested herself so much about the unfortunate young man lately murdered in the Glen of the Downs, has been long emphatically styled 'The widow's and the orphan's friend."—*Courier Newspaper, 27th October*, 1798.

1798. meant, and a most tempting offer, if I only considered of this world; perhaps even I might be free from blame from my fellow-men, but even in this point of view, I confess I cannot see how I should be justified. You know, sir, before the late insurrection, I was, as you are pleased to say, a faithful subject, and had I not been driven from my loyalty, I would cheerfully have ventured my life in the service of my king and country, as I often did, to bring offenders against the laws to justice, but, how could I now go against those whom I have influenced, and perhaps led into rebellion. I could not do it, from the conscious feeling that I should be committing an unpardonable crime; I would think every projecting rock, one of my old friends presenting a musket at my head, and I should in my sleep be haunted with a thousand guilty horrors; but, sir, if I were proof against all these things, there is a circumstance above all other considerations, which renders such an act on my part impossible. I HAVE SWORN. I should be guilty of perjury, *a crime against my Maker*. I am *a Protestant, sir*. I have called God to witness my truth, and *I cannot be absolved from my oath*, you, as a minis-

ter of the same church to which I belong, know it. But in requesting me to do this thing, *you know not what you ask!* However kindly intentioned you feel towards me, and I believe you desire to serve me to the fullest extent of your power, you would not, I am sure, require me to take steps for the destruction of those to whom *I have sworn to be faithful.* No, sir, during the whole of my career I have had an approving conscience. I, in becoming a rebel, acted contrary to my inclination, and against my wishes, in defence of my life; in that I *felt myself right,* whether justly or not I cannot say, but *I felt that I was justified,* and the idea sustained me. I cannot without horror contemplate what my feelings would be with the sin of perjury upon me. Sir, I could not live under it, no earthly reward would make life tolerable. My interior would not allow me to accept your offer; I would be glad to remain at home, but if I do, it must be with 'a conscience void of offence towards God.' Let me go an exile to a foreign land, rather than remain at home banished from an approving conscience." 1798.

His Excellency expressed himself much pleased with my sentiments, and said he could

1798. but approve my resolution; that I had given very substantial reasons why I could not accept the offer, which had been made. He said it was very creditable to my feelings and character. He added, he had no doubt I would do well, for a man holding such principles could not fail to prosper.

Lord Powerscourt remarked, he wished such an offer had been made to me in the month of May last.

Lord Rossmore said he had known me many years, and that I had always borne and deserved the character of a straight-forward honest man, and he had seen me in many situations, all of which I had discharged with fidelity. They then individually wished me good morning and success, and retired.

Next morning Captain Robert Gore, of Seaview, one of the most amiable and worthy of men, whose humanity during the dreadful summer of the rebellion was very conspicuous; paid me a visit, and sat with me for some hours. He had received a desperate pike wound at the battle of Newtown Mount Kennedy. He told me he wished much to have seen me on the night of that battle, as he was determined to

have placed Mrs. Gore under my protection, and if it had been so, I should certainly have done all I could to protect the lady, or any one connected with that excellent man. He promised to make a collection to defray the expense of the passage of my family, but I sailed before it reached me. On his going away, I found a guinea on my table, which he had left for me. 1798.

My next visitor, was Thomas King, Esq. who resided near Rathdrum, captain of a corps of cavalry. I have made honourable mention of him in this narrative.* He asked me several questions respecting the skirmish I had with his cavalry, and told me my two first shots had wounded two of his men. They were both fired by the Frenchman from his rifle. I told Captain King, I had no desire to spare either him or his men, and had I come across them on equal terms, I would have made a regular hash of them. I was not on good terms with this gentleman, and had no disposition to gratify him, which he soon found out, and departed.

My last visitor was the Rev. Mr. Weeks, from

* See pages 209 and 216.

1798. Dec. Anamoe, a kind hearted gentleman, and a faithful minister, who was much attached to me from my earliest youth; he was really a friend, one whose good advice had been of great advantage to me, in forming my character and opinions. When he found I had obtained permission for my wife and family to accompany me in my exile, he was much gratified. I told him however, that the permission would have been of little use, for I had no means of paying their passage, had not my guardian angel, Mrs. Latouche, stepped forward and paid it for me; may she be rewarded in heaven for this act! "Thanks to the good opinions and advice I heard from you, sir," said I, addressing myself to Mr. Weeks, "I have always detested the idea of possessing wealth procured from plunder, or I should not now require assistance from any one. But I would have felt myself degraded into a robber if I had any other man's money in my pocket."

My wife now returned from the county of Wicklow, and informed me that those indebted to me, one and all refused payment. I said—"My dear, it is very ungrateful conduct, but we cannot help it, and must therefore submit."

The period of my removal now approached; it was not expected by me so soon, and its haste wounded me to the soul, and involved both me and my wife in the deepest grief. On the 31st December, O'Bryan came to me to say I must move down to a small room on the lower story; and there I saw the close of that most unhappy year 1798. 1798. Dec. 31.

END OF FIRST PART.

NOTE

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE FIRST PART OF THE MEMOIRS OF JOSEPH HOLT.

The proceedings of Holt, subsequent to the end of August, have scarcely received any notice from the historians of the Irish Rebellion of 1798. This may be in some measure accounted for, by the superior interest of the French invasion at Killalla, which took place on the 22d August, and the general excitement consequent thereon, which continued until the middle of September—Humbert having surrendered himself and his small army, as prisoners of war, on the 8th of that month. The national feeling of alarm produced by this decided proof of the continuance of a foreign design upon Ireland, was still further prolonged by the appearance of a French squadron off the coast of the county of Donegal, which was defeated and dispersed on the 11th October, by the fleet under the command of Sir John B. Warren, but it was not until the 21st of October, that the Hoche,

(now her Majesty's ship Donegal) which had been captured with the notorious Theobald Wolfe Tone on board, arrived in Lough Swilly.

The public mind was so intensely occupied, as to Tone's fate, that until after his death, which occurred on the 19th November, little attention, comparatively speaking, seems to have been bestowed upon the movements of domestic enemies. Holt surrendered himself on the 10th of November, and was lodged, a prisoner, in the Castle of Dublin on the subsequent day.

The following newspaper paragraphs are all that the Editor has been able to collect, respecting Holt's achievements, from the latter part of August to the period of his surrender; of course they can only be regarded as mere contemporary rumours, and it is quite clear that some of the particulars related are unfounded, but having been promulgated, it is the duty of an impartial Editor, to allow the reader an opportunity of contrasting them with Holt's own statements, for which purpose references are made to the corresponding pages of his narrative.

Extract from a private Letter, dated Dublin, 31st August.

August. "I yesterday [30th August] informed you of an express having arrived from Wicklow, with despatches for government. It now appears that the rebel leader Holt, is making the most alarming progress in that county, particularly since he learned that the French had effected a landing."

24. "On Friday last they had an action with a party of the yeomanry, in which six of the later were killed, amongst whom were two brothers named Tate."—*Courier Newspaper, 5th September*, 1798.

28. "On Tuesday last, Captains King and Mills, of Rathdrum,

were attacked by a party of this banditti, in the road between Arklow and Newbridge; a smart action took place, in which the loyalists had the misfortune to lose two of their men, although they succeeded in routing the rebels."* 1798. August.

"The next day, the same officers, in scouring the country, fell in with the rebels under their General, Holt, who again attacked them, and were again beaten, with the loss of four of their party killed (amongst whom was one Hacket, the second in command), and several of them wounded—the remainder fled precipitately, leaving their pikes, muskets, ammunition, and horses, as prizes to the gallant Rathdrum yeomanry, who brought them, together with Miss Holt, the General's sister, into the town of Rathdrum." 29.

"We are sorry to mention, that in the county of Wicklow, a small but desperate band of rebels, still continue to reject the proffered amnesty, and carry devastation through a part of that unhappy country."—*Courier Newspaper, 8th September*, 1798.

Extract from a private Letter, dated Dublin, 31st August.

"Yesterday morning, another engagement took place near Coolgrany, in which eleven yeomen fell.† Mr. King, a very active magistrate of the county, was taken prisoner, as were also several other gentlemen."—*Courier Newspaper, 5th September*, 1798. 30.

"On Thursday [30], Mr. Hume, member for the county, as he proceeded to examine the state of the country near his house at Humewood, was waylaid by a detachment of Holt's party, who fired some shots at him, one of which passed through the crown of his hat. The Humewood cavalry immediately went in pursuit of them, but the rebels, by their activity,

* This is probably the affair described by Holt at p. 146.

† See pages 147, 148.

1798. September 1. easily eluded their approach and fled into the bogs and mountains. This escape made the rebels more audacious, and on Saturday, Holt and his ruffians, to the number of about one hundred, were surprised burning houses in the Glen of Imail, by a party of the 89th regiment from Baltinglass;* the rebels instantly fled, but were not fortunate enough to escape the activity of the Humewood corps, which, under Captain W. Hume, met them in their retreat, and killed several with muskets in their hands."—*Courier Newspaper, 8th September*, 1798.

Extracts from Letters, dated Dublin, Wednesday, Sept. 5.

4 "Last night the rebel General Holt scoured the country for some miles round Blessington, with a body of men reckoned at about four hundred. There was no force in the town that could venture to repel him; he therefore swept off a considerable number of cattle, which seemed to be his principal object."†

"Holt, in consequence of a recent accession of strength, has become daring in the extreme. He last night attacked the town of Blessington, in the county of Wicklow, and carried it, beating the yeomanry into the church.‡ He, however, thought it adviseable to abandon it before morning, taking with him all the arms, ammunition, and valuables, he could collect.

"This man, who was formerly a revenue officer, would have surrendered with the rest of the rebels who accepted of the amnesty offered by Counseller Dobbs (a gentleman, whose conduct on this and several other occasions, deserves much praise), but for the circumstance of his having some militia deserters under his command;§ he refusing to surrender and avail himself of the proffered mercy, unless they were in-

* See p. 146.
† See pages 223. 228.
‡ See pages 225. 228.
§ See pages 144. 157. 204.

cluded in the pardon. This, as must be expected, was refused, and he, since that period, has continued in open rebellion." —*Courier Newspaper*, 10*th September*, 1798. 1798. September

"A letter was on Wednesday [5th September] received from Blessington, in the county of Wicklow, which mentioned that Holt, the insurgent leader, with a few followers, had made his appearance in that part of the country on Tuesday, and that there was such a pursuit after him, as he could not possibly avoid. Holt was some time a constable in one of the baronies of the county of Dublin."—*Courier Newspaper*, 11*th September*, 1798. 4.

Extract from a private Letter, Dublin, 7th September.

"5th September. The county of Cavan is positively up. There was an action on Wednesday between a party of the Prince of Wales' Light Dragoons, and Latouche's Yeoman Cavalry, and a strong detachment of Holt's rebel gang, in which the latter retreated to the mountains with some loss." —*Courier Newspaper*, 12*th September*, 1798. 5.

Extract of a letter from Kilcullen Bridge, 5th September.

"Information having been received by Lieutenant General Dundas, that a party of Holt's robbers, headed by a fellow called Doyle,* were plundering and carrying off the cattle from the lands in the neighbourhood of Ballymore-Eustace, a detachment of the Prince of Wales' Light Dragoons, and Captain Latouche's corps were ordered under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Orde, to scour that part of the country; the detachment retook the cattle, and came up with about eighty of the rebels mounted, at the hill of Ballynahound, where they were preparing to bury some of their men who had been killed in the morning; on the appearance of the

* See page 256, and the index.

1798. detachment they immediately fled across the bog, and took
September to the mountains."—*Courier Newspaper, 13th Sept.* 1798.

Extract from a Letter, dated Dublin, September 10.

10. "A proclamation is shortly expected to be issued, offering a reward for the apprehension of Holt, the leader of the Wicklow rebels.* It was currently reported, this evening, that he, with forty-five of his adherents, were this morning made prisoners by a party of the Wicklow yeomanry. His men, it seems, have lately displaced him from his command, and given it to a man named Murphy."—*Courier Newspaper, 15th September*, 1798.

11. "A reward of 300*l.* is offered for the apprehension of the rebel chief, Holt,* from which circumstance it appears, that the statement, by a morning paper, of his having been taken, together with forty of his followers, is unfounded."—*Dublin Evening Post, September* 11, 1798.

Dublin, Saturday, 22d September.

16. "We hear that the county of Wicklow is still subject to the depredations of Holt's and Hacket's gangs. Some days since, a party of these desperadoes, well mounted and armed, consisting of about fifty, not content with having before carried off the stock, and many things of value, from Ballybeg (the property of the Rev. Richard Symes), returned there as early as five o'clock on Sunday evening, having heard that some yeomanry corps were to be stationed there to protect it and the adjacent country, and in a few hours reduced to ashes, with the greatest part of its furniture, that ancient and respectable mansion, which has been the family residence upwards of a century."†

"On Sunday last, Hunter Gowan, Esq., and his corps, took post at Aughrim, in the county of Wicklow, with intent

* See pages 151, 152. † See pages 177, 178.

to keep the peace of that neighbourhood; but on Thursday [20th September], Holt and his whole force attacked the place, and forced them to retire." *—*Courier Newspaper*, 26*th September*, 1798. 1798. September.

Extracts from private Letters, Dublin, 17*th Sept.* 1798.

"A very large force has been sent into the county of Wicklow to annihilate the numerous hordes of rebels, which Holt, Murphy, and a man named M'Mahon,† a *ci-devant* attorney, command." 17.

Dublin, 18*th September.*

"Holt and his few, but desperate associates, still continue to plunder in the ill-fated county of Wicklow. A military party has, we understand, been specially dispatched to hunt down this banditti, and we doubt not, that persevering activity will soon accomplish so desirable an object."—*Courier Newspaper*, 22*d September*, 1798.

Extract from a private Letter, dated Dublin, 20*th Sept.*

"Holt and his gang have not been driven from the Wicklow mountains; they still commit occasional acts of depredation on the loyal people [illegible] this audacity to issue a counter-proclamation to that of General Craig, offering a reward for the taking of some loyal gentlemen of the county of Wicklow; and with an assurance unexampled, promising protection and favour to Lord Cornwallis, should the chance of war throw his Excellency into his hands."—*Courier Newspaper*, 24*th September*, 1798.

Waterford, September 30*th.*

"The picket guard at Newtown Mount Kennedy, was fired upon on Monday se'nnight by a party of rebels, who had the temerity to approach so near the army stationed 19.

* See pages 187 to 195. † See pages 40, 41.

1798. September. there. One soldier was slightly wounded."—*Courier Newspaper*, 9*th October*, 1798.

Dublin, Friday, September 21.

19. "Accounts were yesterday received from the county of Wicklow, by which it appears that an engagement took place on the day before, between a party of the Powerscourt cavalry (yeomen), and a large body of rebels, wherein the former suffered very considerable loss."—*Courier Newspaper*, 25*th September*.

"On Wednesday night last [19th], a battalion, composed of about forty of Holt's miscreants, as it is conjectured, penetrated into the neighbourhood of Cell-bridge, and committed the most wanton depredations on the property of several industrious and peaceable inhabitants of that vicinity. Amongst those who suffered, Mr. Cruise of Ardrey, and Mr. Peppard of Bank's-town, have been plundered, not only of what cash and provisions they had in their houses, but also of furniture and cattle."—*Dublin Journal.*—*Courier Newspaper*, 26*th September*, 1798.

20. "This day, General Lake is expected to [illegible] for the county of Wicklow, in order, by a system of decisive and persevering measures, to accomplish the reduction of Holt, and the disgraceful banditti who have hitherto kept alive the rebellion in the county of Wicklow."—*Dublin Journal.*

Dublin, September 21.

21. "This day, it is expected, a general attack will be made on Holt's force, in the county of Wicklow. Near 2000 troops have recently been collected for the purpose of finally extinguishing the rebel force in that quarter.

"It will scarcely be believed that this daring leader and his band have, for some time back been enabled, in the three counties adjacent to the metropolis, to levy contributions and destroy the houses of those gentlemen who have rendered

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